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SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1867.

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CRYSTAL PALACE.—THIS DAY (SATURDAY).
MR. MANN'S BENEFIT CONCERT.—Madame Lemmons-Sherrington, Madame Louisa Vinning, Mdlle. Amalia May, Miss Fanny Armytage, Mdlle. Bauermeister, Mdlle. Cosenza, and Miss Julia Elton, with Mr. Tom Hohler, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, Signor Foll, Mr. Lewis Thomas, and Mr. Santley. Pianoforte, Madame Arabella Goddard. Crystal Palace Choir of 300 Voices; Band of Coldstream Guards, etc. Commence at Three o'clock.
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CAVATINA, "MID THE ROSE LEAVES OF LOVE"	W. GUERINSEY.
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A MANUAL FOR COMPOSERS, &c.*

(Continued from p. 574).

CHAPTER IV.

On the various plans of placing the orchestra.

231. There are three kinds of orchestras, each of which should be arranged differently, these are: an opera orchestra, concert orchestra, and a military band.

232. On the old French opera plan—a plan still adopted in most lyrical theatres of France and the Continent—the conductor's or leader's desk is placed in the centre, close to the foot-lights; hence the musicians are partly behind it, and partly at the sides. To obviate as much as possible the inconveniences of this arrangement, many conductors place all the first violins on one side and the second violins on the other, on parallel lines between them, and perpendicularly with the desks. The basses are placed at the ends of the orchestra, and the remaining basses and other instruments behind the conductor. Others arrange the orchestra differently, but the radical vice of this arrangement is, the leader does not see his band, and consequently loses to a certain extent the power of animating them.

233. The best arrangement is as follows:—The leader opposite the centre of the stage—his desk four or five feet from it, so that his eye can command the greater part of his musicians, and be himself seen; the wind instruments facing the audience; flutes, oboes, clarionets, and bassoons on one side; horns, trumpets, and trombones on the other; the first violins ranged to the left of the leader, in perpendicular lines to the leader's desk; the tenors behind him; the second violins to the right similar to the first violins, with two violoncello desks behind; one or two contrabasses at each extremity of the orchestra; the rest of the violoncellos with their backs to the audience, and first violoncello and double bass near the leader, but somewhat behind him.

234. It is easier to dispose a band for a concert than for a theatre. Placed amphitheatrically, all are seen by the leader, who is also seen by all. The first violins ranged in parallel columns to the left of the auditory; the second violins opposite the first, leaving a necessary space in the centre; within this centre, the first violoncello and double bass; behind, the tenors; rather elevated above them, the violoncellos, in one or two lines, as the dimensions of the orchestra will admit; further up, all the wind instruments; the flutes, clarionets, and oboes in front; horns, bassoons, trumpets, and trombones higher up; tympani in the centre; the double basses at back and at the sides; the leader in front of the first violins, on an elevated platform, with his back to the public.

235. The disposition of a military band is the most simple and easy of all. It should take the form of a horse-shoe, in one or more lines, according to the number of executants; the clarionets on one side; flutes, oboes, bassoons, and solo cornet and alt horns on the other; horns, trumpets, trombones, etc., at back, and behind these the instruments of percussion; the master in the centre, so as to be well seen by his performers.

CHAPTER V.

On the Tuning of Instruments.

236. It is an incontestable truth, that no orchestra is perfectly in tune—indeed, so much the reverse as to be manifest to its hearers. Whatever care be taken, whatever means be adopted to tune all the instruments alike, accidental causes may render all efforts futile and useless. Atmospheric variations, which do not uniformly affect all instruments alike, cold, or extreme heat, exercise a powerful and fatal influence over instruments in passing from the music-room into the orchestra, more particularly into a concert-room—the change of temperature affecting them even to a quarter of a tone. In winter the difference of the external and internal temperature is particularly felt, and the difficulty of remaining in tune proportionably greater. Brass instruments warm more slowly than wood instruments—the lower part of a bassoon is frequently cold when the upper part is already warm. The metal strings of violins, tenors, and violoncellos rise, while the gut strings fall. In fine, a thousand accidental causes conspire to

oppose the orchestra being in perfect tune together. Every precaution should be adopted to obviate this inconvenience.

237. In most orchestras the pitch is taken from the oboe, it being less impressionable than the other wind instruments, the quantity of warm air which gets into the tube through the reed being very inconsiderable. However, the fixity of pitch of this instrument is not always certain, for the caprice of the artist, in the size of his reed, which at times is either longer or shorter, raises or lowers the pitch. It were advisable to procure a more certain and invariable pitch by the adoption of a metallic blade, fixed in a frame similar to a small instrument common in Germany called *phys-harmonica*. With a similar tuning instrument, the leader could not only give the pitch, but verify it. This system would put an end to the discussions which constantly take place between those who play wind instruments, each of whom insists his pitch should regulate all others.

238. Nothing is more difficult than to tune an orchestra where each performer brings his own instrument. The flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, and trumpet offer so many shades of pitch, that it were well if all these instruments were made upon one system. The first care of a leader should be to have these first tuned together. When the oboes are well tuned either by inserting the reed further into the instrument if it is too low, or *vice versa* if too high. The flutes should be tuned by these. The pump has been discarded from most flutes, but to pull out the tubes is an evil remedy for the instrument being too sharp, as it destroys the proportions, and occasions several false notes. It is better the flutes should be slightly flat when the tuning takes place, because they get sharp sooner than any other instrument, as it receives a larger quantity of warm air, with the exception of the Russian bassoon, which, from its size, escapes the influence of warm air.

239. The clarionets should be tuned by the oboes and flutes. If they are too sharp, the mouthpiece should be lengthened, if too flat, shortened; and in case the remedy be insufficient, every means to warm the tube must be adopted.

240. The bassoons should follow. This instrument is generally too flat in the lower part, and sometimes too sharp in the upper, hence it is necessary to give it a medium pitch, by the position of the reed. The bottom portion of the instrument should be well warmed, so as to equalize as much as possible the pitch of the upper part.

241. The horns and trumpets have certain means of getting the pitch, by the aid of slides; when they are too flat, either warmth or a shorter mouthpiece offer the only remedy. It is better to tune these instruments rather sharp than otherwise, as when the pitch goes beyond the pitch of the instruments there are no means left to rectify it.

242. Trombones are less exposed than other brass instruments to atmospheric influence, owing to the great development of the tube—once the pitch regulated it will keep it.

243. String instruments are more easily tuned than any others, but they get out of tune more easily, and require constant verification. Unison of tune between violins, tenors, violoncellos, and double basses, is exceedingly rare, but with some care this is readily obtained. After the wind instruments are tuned, the leader should give the A to each instrument separately; but it must be remembered that in tuning the other strings to the A their intonation varies, so that when the operation is completed it is necessary to tune all together before proceeding into the orchestra. This verification should take place after the performance of the first piece, rapidly and as shortly as possible, because the instruments, having undergone the influence of the warm air of the theatre or room, may have lost their balance of tone.

244. With the exception of the last observation, the tuning should take place out of the hearing of the public, for nothing detracts so much from the development of musical sensations as the tuning and preluding in the hearing of the public.

(To be continued).

DUSSELDORF.—The Town Association for Male Voices will celebrate next month the 25th anniversary of its existence by a festival lasting two days. From twelve to fourteen hundred singers will take part in it. The first day's programme will contain compositions executed by the combined Associations present. On the second day, the various Associations will contend against each other for a prize to be awarded to the most deserving.

* By F. J. Fetis. Translated from the original by Wellington Guernsey.

THE HEREFORD FESTIVAL.

MALVERN, Aug. 24.

In my last communication from Hereford I said that such a work as Herr Goldschmidt's *Ruth* demands a deliberate judgment. A deliberate judgment I am now about to give it. Circumstances are favourable to this. The bustle and excitement of the festival, and of Hereford in the festival week, are over. The town itself lies far away over the tops of the grand old hills, under the shadow of which I write. All nature—and a good deal of nature can be seen from this spot—is basking lazily in the summer sunshine, there is stillness over everything, and even the balmy Malvern zephyrs, usually so active, do no more than languidly stir the folds of the flag which Admiral Wink of the North hoists at the main of his comfortable craft. At such a time, and in such a place, the reflective faculties get the upper hand, and one is given to looking at men and things with a judicial impartiality, because removed for a while from contact with disturbing influences, unless, indeed, champagne count among them. Here it is easy to understand why, of old time, judgment seats were erected on the tops of the hills, and why Jove (who drank nectar, which, poets say, is better than champagne) located on the Olympian heights. But I must stop this line of disquisition, or I shall be reminded of the Saturday Reviewer who remarked that "no sooner does one of these gentlemen (special correspondents) find himself on an eminence than he begins to emit an avalanche of metaphorical bombast." To the matter in hand, therefore, and at once.

Nobody censures, or even pities, him who suffers from "the last infirmity of noble minds." Rather does such an one, in every effort to gratify his ambition, receive the encouragement and applause of his fellows. There is something in the sight of a man addressing himself to a great and difficult adventure which calls forth our instinctive admiration. But there are, also, some adventures which we insist shall not be undertaken without qualifications awarded only to a few. In the knightly days, he who would do the deeds of knighthood was first required to show himself worthy. Those days are gone, but their spirit remains; and when a man, only in his novitiate as an esquire, rides into the ring wearing golden spurs, we send our heralds to tell him he has made a mistake, and bid him begone. If a youthful bard indite sonnets "to his mistress's eyebrow," we can tolerate his mediocrity, but if he attempt an epic poem without sufficient means, we flagellate him as a warning not to do it again. So, too, if a musician make a modest appearance as a composer, we bid him "God speed;" but when he comes before us with an oratorio which, weighed in the balances, is found wanting, he neither deserves nor receives any mercy. The composition of an oratorio is one of the things demanding first and foremost a careful overhauling of resources. If he who would undertake it can find within himself profound technical knowledge, lofty artistic feeling, great power of invention, and that kind of mental vision which, not only sees the whole, but the relation to it of each part, then, by all means let him set about the task. But let him examine himself carefully, since it depends upon the accuracy of his conclusion whether or not he is to be adjudged guilty of an impudent assumption. A mistake on this point altogether fails of excuse. Something depends, however, on the nature of the subject selected. For a man to attempt the illustration of the passion and sufferings of the Messiah, or the tremendous plagues of Egypt, or the varied and stirring incidents in the life of Elijah is a different thing from essaying the same office for the simple story of Ruth the Moabitess. So far Herr Goldschmidt has shown himself modest. He might have addressed himself to the opening of the Seven Seals, or the Deluge, or the Fall of Man, while he was about it. In that he did not, he must be accredited with having gauged his powers to a certain degree. The pity of it is that he attempted an oratorio at all. Before he set pen to paper nobody thought him equal to such a task, and nobody blamed him for the want of power. Now, the incapacity is proved, and with it another incapacity having relation to self-knowledge, which is not so much a misfortune as a fault.

To make matters worse for Herr Goldschmidt the subject he selected is not only easy of treatment, compared with most others, but adapted to call out whatever latent power a composer may possess. Its sweet simplicity, its perfect naturalness, and the touching pathos of many of its situations, stir up no ordinary sympathy, so that he who reads it must needs realize every inci-

dent it contains. We all know the marvellous effect this has in facilitating illustration or description; to say nothing of the zest which it enables the illustrator or describer to bring to his work. Looking at it thus, it is hard to see how a musical setting of so beautiful a story could fail utterly, unless such a failure were sedulously courted. One would imagine that a composer has only to open his heart and mind to its influences, and to write down the thoughts it spontaneously inspires, in order to be, if not profoundly learned, at least simple, natural, and pleasing. Nobody supposes for a moment that Herr Goldschmidt courted failure, or that in writing his work he did not labour with zeal and conscientiousness. He has shown us, however, that besides being unable to rise to the height of oratorio, he is, through some singular defect of organization, insensible to things which would help him on his upward path. Some composers fail because of their subject; Herr Goldschmidt has failed in spite of his. In either case the result is the same, but—with a difference.

Looking over the new oratorio (or "Sacred Pastoral," if the composer like it better) one is first impressed with the singularity of its construction. *Ruth* resembles nothing more than a piece of mosaic, or rather a Dutch chimney piece, in which each tile tells a different story, and has no connection with its neighbours except that of proximity. The same patchy and fragmentary character is found in the libretto, which is divided into a succession of short "fyttes," headed, "At Bethlehem," "In the Harvest Field," "At the Threshing Floor," &c. In this case, however, there is a necessity for such a defect, which would have suggested to a judicious composer the desirableness of providing a remedy, as far as possible, by the more symmetrical construction of his music. Instead of doing so, its influence upon Herr Goldschmidt has been in the opposite direction, and the whole work is a mass of undeveloped and unconnected thoughts, which fall upon the ear much like the snatches of conversation among the passers-by in a crowded street. Now, it is a simple question like that of Naomi, "Who art thou my daughter?" then a tedious orchestral passage not "germane to the issue" in the slightest degree, and next comes the answer, almost every sentence of which is marked by an interlude after the almost exploded fashion of church psalmody. How inexpressibly wearisome this soon becomes no one needs to be told; nor is it necessary to point out how fatal to success was the inability even to sketch the outlines of an oratorio of which it is the sign and result.

Out of the twenty-eight "numbers" in the work, ten are recitatives, many of them very long. The composer's treatment of these recitatives becomes, therefore, an important matter, having a formidable influence upon the character of the whole. It is to be regretted that he did not adhere to the "ancient lines" so well marked out by the masters of his art, who, except in rare instances, were content to provide the simplest means for the musical declamation of narrative. Only such are called for by the necessity of the case. Recitative in oratorio is but the thread that connects the various parts together, and its elaboration is both unnecessary and out of place. For some reason or other Herr Goldschmidt has failed to recognize this fact. He has, throughout, attempted to endow the narrative portions of his libretto with a musical interest they cannot possibly bear, and which, by the resulting odd association of ideas, becomes positively ludicrous. In doing so he has not been content with what is understood as "accompanied recitative." He has rather expanded it into a kind of descriptive symphony for the orchestra, the voice coming in now and then, like that of a showman, to tell what is meant to be described. Even if this were well done the effect would be open to question, for reasons not necessary to mention, since in the present instance it has been done badly. Some of Herr Goldschmidt's many interludes have no meaning at all, and others suggest ideas at variance with the connexion in which they are found. Take, for example, those in the opening recitative, where the tenor voice puts us in possession of the dry details respecting the earlier history of Naomi. Upon this passage, which appeals to sentiment about as much as does the multiplication table, Herr Goldschmidt has lavished an amount of orchestral tenderness which would have been far better employed elsewhere. As a rule, however, his interludes are successions of chords signifying nothing, but productive of much in the shape of weariness and impatience. After the *Ruth* recitatives, given though they be in the eloquent words of Scripture, I should turn with

relief even to those we owe to Handel and Dr. Morell; which are at least interesting as showing how genius sometimes struggles unavailingly against wordy boredom.

Closely allied to his treatment of recitative is Herr Goldschmidt's peculiar management of the orchestra throughout the work. In either case he has set accepted canons at defiance with a result disastrous only to himself. As used by the great masters of oratorio, the orchestra is made strictly subordinate to the voices, and looked upon as an accessory intended to sustain and relieve the vocal parts, as well as to colour the effects produced. This may be done in different ways, and in varying degree, but in no single case can it be said that the limits dividing the inferior from the equal have been exceeded. Even in the *Creation*, of all oratorios the one where the orchestra is most important, its subordination is apparent, though it must be admitted that such a result was only made possible by the consummate skill and judgment of the composer. Herr Goldschmidt has chosen to violate this rule. He has attempted to push his orchestra into a position of equality with, if not of superiority to, the vocal music, and has thereby spoiled his work for several good and sufficient reasons. In the first place by the fitful, erratic, and independent action of the instruments he has not only left the voices in great part unsustained, but has positively turned what might have been an assistance into an obstacle. The orchestra is throughout felt to be a bore likely to come in at any moment—as a matter of fact it does come in at very many moments—and by distracting the attention of the singers, hinder them in their work. The result is that one is driven to regard the instruments and voices as antagonists rather than fellow labourers for a common end. It is true that, looking at the general character of the music, nobody can feel the slightest interest in either. The fact may be an ill compliment to Herr Goldschmidt, but it will afford a crumb of comfort to those who may have to hear his composition. Again, the orchestra, made thus prominent and intrusive, gives an added offence by reason of the indifferent music it has to discourse. It is curious to note with what singular recklessness Herr Goldschmidt has rushed into unnecessary difficulties. He is like a man who, having to ford a river, does so at the widest and deepest part, with the certainty of being laughed at even if he gets across. An oratorio constructed like *Ruth* is the most exacting of its kind, because the incessant use of the orchestra, as a principal, demands a power of musical description, and a fertility of invention given only to a very few. Among those very few is not Herr Goldschmidt. The preludes and interludes which form so large a part of his work are remarkable, spite of here and there a striking passage, for a monotony and a poverty of ideas which make their very existence a monument of the composer's self-delusion. Their special application very rarely appears. The architect of the Crystal Palace so drew his plans that any column or girder would fit equally well into a hundred different places. After the same fashion, though not with the same symmetrical result, Herr Goldschmidt's orchestral passages might be arranged anyhow and anyhow would be equally bad.

I should like, after all this necessary fault-finding, to be able to praise the vocal music which *Ruth* contains. But Herr Goldschmidt has barred the door against any such satisfaction. He has adopted in its literal meaning the cry of poor Pat: "I will be drowned, and nobody shall help me." Surely if he could not be other than fragmentary and incoherent—if he could not avoid treating the orchestra as I have shown he has treated it—it is in his power to write vocal phrases which should be singable and melodious. We were none of us disposed to be exacting on this matter. Nobody asked for the divine tunefulness of Mozart, the severe dignity of Handel, or the flowing grace of Haydn. But tune of some kind was expected. Pity for us that we should again have to learn how blessed he is that expecteth nothing. There is hardly a single theme in *Ruth* which falls pleasantly upon the ear, and not one likely to remain in the memory. This is the most fatal blot of all. Melody is the soul of music. There may be in a work everything else—ripe scholarship, great experience, and excellent judgment, but without melody it is no more than a perfect body wanting life. Far better a body maimed or deformed, if it but breathe and live, than such an one. Herr Goldschmidt offers us neither: for his *Ruth* is an unsymmetrical corpse.

But besides all this, and to take a lower view, the new oratorio is wanting in proofs of scholarship. Thought it evinces in abun-

dance, and much painstaking care; but the most zealous workman can do nothing without tools. Having invented such themes as was possible, Herr Goldschmidt seems to have been at a loss how to work them up. Of development, masterly or otherwise, there is little or none in the work. Of repetition in various keys there is plenty, but repetition affords a poor and sorry substitute for the power to present the same thought in ever-varying, always interesting forms. As examples of contrapuntal skill, the two or three fugal choruses in *Ruth* are of a very inferior order, resembling nothing so much as the exercises of a student endowed with poor abilities, or afflicted with an indifferent teacher.

After what has been said any detailed analysis of the work is unnecessary, because, in the first place, I should have to repeat myself, and next, as *Ruth* is not likely to be heard again, the result to the reader would hardly repay my trouble and his time. The foregoing general remarks have been made, not because they were demanded by the importance of the new oratorio, so much as because they enforce the moral of Herr Goldschmidt's failure. In some districts the farmers have a habit of nailing dead kites to their barn doors, *pour encourager les autres*. With the same benevolent object in view I have written this somewhat lengthy notice.

The concert in the Shire Hall on Thursday evening was well attended, and, but for the necessary absence of Mr. Sims Reeves, who was holding himself in reserve for the *Messiah*, would have given unmixed satisfaction. The orchestral pieces were Weber's overture to *Der Freyschütz*, and Beethoven's Symphony in C minor, No. 5. The former, described by Berlioz as "the Queen of operatic preludes," is sure of a favourable reception everywhere by reason of its striking character. But the performance of the symphony could only be looked upon as an experiment. Its appreciation requires taste, some degree of musical cultivation, and enthusiasm enough to make more than half an hour's continuous attention possible. I am glad to say that the experiment was fairly successful, for the Hereford folks listened—some of them devoutly—and, moreover, they testified by their applause that listening was a pleasure. I have had my doubts about the wisdom of presenting the highest form of orchestral writing at provincial concerts, but a few more experiences like that at Hereford will go far to remove them. It is hardly worth while to dilate upon the manner in which the band gave Beethoven's glorious composition. Perfectly familiar with it as they were, it could not go otherwise than well, and it went well accordingly. Another selection, in which voices and orchestra took co-ordinate rank, was the spirited and picturesque March from Spohr's *Jessonda*. This, too, was well played and sung, as became its merit, which, by-the-by, is somewhat greater than that of some other, and far more popular choral marches. Mdlle. Tietjens had set down for her, the *scena* from *Der Freyschütz*, "Softly Sighs," the *cavatina* from *I Puritani* "Qui la voce," and Donizetti's "Ardon gl'incensi," all of which she sang as usual,—that is to say, in the case of the last two, not quite so well as she would have done had the music been better suited to her means. Madame Patey-Whytock gave Land's song, "When night is darkest," very feelingly, and also joined Miss Edith Wynne in Bishop's well-known duet, "As it fell upon a day." The last named lady gained the only encore of the evening for "Tell me my heart," and was loudly applauded in two Welsh songs, "The Ash Grove," and "The Bells of Aberdovey," in each of which she had the advantage of Mr. Trust's admirable harp *obbligato*. Miss Julia Elton appeared but once, and that was to sing Meyerbeer's "Nobil Signor" (*Gli Ugonotti*), a choice upon which I cannot compliment her very heartily. Mr. Montem Smith's share of the work was confined to the old ditty, "The Woodpecker," but in the absence of Mr. Reeves, he undertook to sing a new ballad by the conductor of the festival, "Dancing with the Daffodils." In the latter the composer himself accompanied, but the merit of the song was hardly made so conspicuous as would have been the case had Mr. Reeves sung it, according to intention. This I say without all reflecting on Mr. Montem Smith, to whom the piece was but imperfectly known. Mr. Santley, on his part, gave the air from *Faust*, written for him by M. Gounod, "Dio possente," and also a repetition of "O ruddier than the cherry," the latter being a voluntary offering, to fill up a blank in the programme. Several vocal selections were sung by the Bradford Choral Society in the course of the evening with much taste and skill.

The performance of the *Messiah* on Friday morning had the

usual effect of filling the Cathedral in every available part. At these festivals the sacred oratorio goes so uniformly well that the critic's task becomes almost a sinecure. So it was on this occasion; the chorus sang as perfectly as could be wished, the band knew the music by heart, and such principals as Madame Goldschmidt, Mdle. Tietjens, Madame Patey-Whytock, Miss Julia Elton, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Santley, and Mr. Weiss made the success of the solos a foregone conclusion. A notice of the performance in detail is, therefore, unnecessary, but there were two features in it not to be passed over. These were, first, the rendering of the sublime of airs, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," by Madame Goldschmidt, which was a marvel of artistic skill, and profound expression; and, next, Mr. Sims Reeves' almost equally wonderful reading of the Passion music. The first was something for one who appreciates the highest qualities of a singer to remember, and even to date from. Never before has such reality been given to the unswerving faith expressed by the sacred text; never before was the Christian's calm confidence in the prospect of death more vividly brought out. The singing of that one air by Madame Goldschmidt was a sermon far more powerful than any ever preached in the same building by the duly appointed teachers of religion. How Mr. Sims Reeves delivers the pathetic music of the Passion is too well known to need description. Yet, whenever he does deliver it, the impression is as great as though he had done it for the first time. As he told the sorrowful story of the "Man of Sorrows" a stillness fell over the crowded Cathedral, which was the best testimony to the singer's power. After putting on record that the "Hallelujah" was repeated by desire, I have done all that is necessary with regard to the concluding performance in the Cathedral.

There was a short chamber concert at the College Hall (an out-of-the-way sort of place) in the evening, which I did not attend, through dread of an anti-climax. There was also a long ball at the Shire Hall, from which also I absented myself. With the latter well attended and successful Terpsichorean gathering the Hereford Festival of 1867 came to an end.

THADDEUS EGG.

DEATH OF MR. J. V. BLAKE.—The announcement of the death of Mr. J. V. Blake, which appeared in yesterday's *Examiner*, will cause a sensation of widespread regret, not alone among the supporters and encouragers of musical talent in Cork, but in the smaller circle, amongst whom Mr. Blake was for a number of years a well-known and esteemed friend. Mr. Blake's premature death ends a career of much artistic promise. Receiving his musical education in the Conservatoire in Paris, and in the Academy of Music, London, and gifted as he was with a voice of rare power and richness, he began his artistic career ten or twelve years ago in the metropolis, with every prospect of soon reaching a most distinguished position in his profession. His knowledge, as a musician, was of that scientific and higher description, which alone wins for a man high rank amongst musicians in the world of taste and refinement. Desire to reside in Cork, however, soon induced him to give up the pursuit of his career in London, and for a lengthened period subsequently he was well known as one of our most gifted local musicians. He returned, but a short time since to London, where, however, ill-health soon after forbade him to hope for the position he might once have attained there. His return to Cork and death at a comparatively early age soon followed. Cork loses one of her most gifted sons in an art in which—justly or unjustly—she has often placed herself in appreciating—by the death of Mr. Blake.—*Cork Examiner*, Aug. 2.

A HINT TO THE DIRECTORS OF MUSICAL FESTIVALS.—An esteemed correspondent, devoted to the Festivals of the Three Choirs is anxious to suggest that the collection for the charity would be a larger one if the plate were handed round whilst the audience is seated. He was shocked, he says, at the number of persons who left the cathedral at Hereford, on Tuesday, without leaving anything for the charity. He says when the ladies held plates scores who would pass the present stewards dare not have passed the ladies. If a certain number of seats were allotted to each steward, our correspondent thinks they could nearly complete the collection during the interval; or a short organ solo might be specially introduced whilst the plates were handed from one to another. People who do not give to the charity forget that the stewards rely upon the subscriptions to make up the annual fund. If the plate were handed from one to another in the building, those who pass by it now would not do so.—*Berrow's Worcester Journal*.

A GOOD JUDGE OF MUSIC.—A smart youngster, hearing his mother remark that she was fond of music, exclaimed, "Then, why don't you buy me a drum?"

BIRMINGHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(From our own Reporter.)

BIRMINGHAM, Monday, Aug. 26.

So far as one can judge at present, there is every prospect of the twenty-ninth Festival in aid of the funds of the Birmingham General Hospital proving, in all respects, as completely successful as any of its predecessors. The following account of the valuable Institution which, once in three years, is the means of giving the capital of the hardware districts a great feast of music not to be excelled in Europe, either in quantity or quality, may not prove altogether unacceptable:—

"The Birmingham General Hospital was founded in the year 1766 by Dr. John Ash, an eminent physician and philanthropist. The institution was at first established on a moderate scale, and contained only forty beds. At this time it was far removed from the town, situate in the midst of fields, and called the General Hospital, near Birmingham. Additions were subsequently made in the years 1791, 1830, and 1856. But the rapidly increasing population of the town and district (chiefly manufacturing and mining), and the consequent overcrowding of the locality, has demanded not only increased accommodation for out-patients, but improved sanitary arrangements for the inmates. Accordingly, after mature deliberation, the Governors in the year 1864 determined to extend the accommodation, and the architect and secretary visited the principal hospitals of England and France, in order to obtain information as to the most improved method of construction. On the presentation of their report, it was resolved to erect two additional wings on the eastern and western extremities of the existing building; and to remove such portions as interfered with the due admission of light and circulation of air. This reconstruction is now nearly completed. Its effect will be to give a hospital containing 223 beds, with an average cubic space of 1,500 feet to the patients (as against about 900 feet in the old system) with separate building for fever cases, an out-patient department, containing spacious waiting hall, consulting rooms, &c., capable of receiving 1000 out-patients per day; extensive kitchens and domestic offices, and healthy dormitories for the nurses. The total cost of the re-construction and improvements will be about £18,000, and very soon the Birmingham General Hospital will, it is believed, be one of the best and most perfect institutions of its kind in the kingdom.

"Many eminent medical men have been attached to the staff of the hospital, and the board room contains portraits of two of its most able physicians—Dr. Ash, the founder (by Sir Joshua Reynolds), and Dr. James Johnstone. There are also portraits of Mr. Freer, Mr. Wood, and Mr. Joseph Hodgson, F.R.S. (late President of the Royal College of Surgeons), who have been surgeons to the institution, and busts and portraits of several eminent benefactors to the charity, including the late Mr. Joseph Moore, who for half a century managed the Musical Festivals.

"Dr. James Johnstone, consulting physician, and Mr. D. W. Crompton, senior surgeon, have recently presented the whole of their extensive collections of medical works to the hospital, which, in addition to its other resources for the practical study of disease, will possess through their liberality, the addition of a valuable library, open not only to the medical staff and students, but, under certain restrictions, to the medical practitioners of the town.

"The institution is supported by a small invested property, by subscriptions, donations, and legacies. Through the kindness of the clergy and ministers of religion, congregational collections are made in the churches and chapels triennially, and produce a large revenue. The proceeds of the musical festival are also devoted to the hospital.

"The doors of the hospital are open day and night for the admission of sick and maimed poor, and the number of in and out-patients relieved during the year ending 30th June last was 21,817, of whom 11,853 were cases of sudden accident or acute medical urgency. The total number of patients relieved since the foundation of the hospital amounts to 671,217.

"The musical festivals were established for the benefit of the hospital in the year 1768, and the profits of the first festival amounted to £299. From that period, to the year 1796, seven meetings were held. In the year 1799 arrangements were made upon a much larger scale, both with regard to the talent and number of the performers. The festivals have since been held triennially (except on one occasion) to the present time. The net profit of the Festival paid to the charity in 1864, one of the most brilliant ever held, was £5,256.

"Besides the relief afforded to many thousand poor sufferers by means of the funds placed at the disposal of the hospital, the Birmingham festivals have acquired an undoubted influence over the musical feelings of the public, both in England and on the Continent. During a century, over which they have now extended, all the principal vocalists and instrumentalists of eminence have assisted at them. Among the

former may be mentioned the well known names of Billington, Mara, Salmon, Catalani, Malibran, Garcia, Stephens, Vestris, Sontag, Clara Novello, Grisi, Viardot Garcia, Bartleman, Braham, Knyvett, Naldi, Vaughan, Lablache, and Mario; and of the latter, Cramer, De Beriot, Lindley, Nicholson, and Harper. The conductorship has been held at various times by Mr. Greateorex, Dr. Crotch, Mr. Knyvett, and for the last six festivals by Mr. Costa, to whose skill and ability much of the success of the later festivals is to be attributed. Many compositions of the highest excellence, in a musical point of view, were written for and first produced at the Birmingham festivals. Among the last named may be mentioned the *St. Paul* and *Lobgesang*, of Mendelssohn, given in 1837 and 1840, and amongst the former his immortal *Elijah*, written for the festival of 1846, and produced under the conductorship of its gifted author. More recently the oratorios of *Eli* and *Naaman* of Mr. Costa, the present conductor, have been composed expressly for, and performed at the festivals of 1855 and 1864. Amongst many other interesting secular compositions it may be added that the cantatas, *Kenilworth*, by Mr. A. S. Sullivan, and *The Bride of Dunkerron*, by Mr. Henry Smart, were written for, and first performed at the festival of 1864.

Altogether twenty-eight festivals have been held since 1768; and the profits which have been paid over to the hospital amount to the princely sum of £84,579. In addition to which, the magnificent organ in the Town Hall, valued at upwards of £5,000, together with an extensive library of music, and other stores, the cost of which has been defrayed out of the festival receipts, are the property of the general hospital."

In the allotment of the reserved seats the principle of "first come, first served," usually adopted elsewhere, is not here observed, the pleasant excitement of a ballot being the rule. This took place on Friday and Saturday last, and the result shows 8,449 places taken and paid for, an excess of 399 over the Festival of 1864. These figures are sufficient to satisfy the managing committee in one very important particular—the monetary aspect—as the expenses are now already more than met. Of course there is yet a large number of persons who, through a variety of circumstances, may have been unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the ballot, while there is also the general outside public who are content to take their chance of unsecured places, so that the £8,245 now in hand will, doubtless, be augmented very considerably, and yield a handsome surplus to the charity.

To-day has been devoted to rehearsals, and ere midnight, band and chorus will have had a fair share of work. This morning *Alexander's Feast*, Sterndale Bennett's new sacred cantata *The Woman of Samaria*, and M. Gounod's *Messe Solenne* have been gone through in addition to some other pieces of minor importance; while this evening Mr. John Francis Barnett's *Ancient Mariner* and various concert pieces will be rehearsed. Dr. Bennett did not conduct his own work, but was in the orchestra, seated by Mr. Cusins, who wielded the conductor's stick and took every pains (going through the cantata twice) to ensure a good performance. I do not pretend to lay claim to the gift of prophecy, but do not think I am either rash or premature in asserting that the Cambridge Professor's renown will be much and deservedly enhanced by this, the latest production from a pen which in the dearth of good music has given us so much that is of the highest order. On entering the orchestra Dr. Bennett was warmly welcomed, and at the end of the work band and chorus (with the few privileged persons in the body of the hall) united in genuine and hearty applause, which I doubt not will be repeated some hundred fold on Wednesday morning next.

I learn from a local print that "the town has already donned its festival attire." At present I have failed to perceive it, at any rate between the Queen's Hotel and the Town Hall.

Tuesday, Aug. 27.

A finer band and chorus than that now assembled at Birmingham it would be next to impossible to assemble, the members of the former certainly comprising names second to none, while the latter includes such an array of vigorous, bright, penetrating voices that it is a positive treat to hear. The instruments number 137 in all, the 1st and 2nd violins being held by M. Sainton and Mr. Willy respectively, the violas having Mr. Doyle for principal, Mr. Collins heading the violoncellos, and Mr. Howell the double basses—a noble army of 89 "strings," admirably balanced by the "wind's" and "percussion," with Mr. Pratten first flute, Mr. Barret first oboe, Mr. Lazarus leading the clarionets, Mr. Hutchins the bassoons,

Mr. T. Harper the trumpets, his brother Charles the horns, and Mr. Hawkes heading the trombones. When to the instrumentalists is added 363 chorus voices you have a total of 500, a number (hear it O Exeter Hall!) quite sufficient for any effect that can by any possibility be required, and beyond which it is neither necessary nor safe in a general way to travel.

To-day, punctually at half-past eleven, the Festival commenced with the National Anthem, the first and second verses being taken by the female voices, accompanied by the organ only, and the last verse by the entire chorus and band. After this came Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. On the 26th August, 1846, a day over twenty-one years since, the composer himself conducted this most sublime and touching of works, when it was first given to the world in this same Town Hall of Birmingham, the principal parts being then sustained by Madame Caradori Allan, Miss Bassano, Miss Hawes, the Misses Williams, Herr Staudigl, Hobbs, Lockey, Phillips, and Machin. At once received by critics, connoisseurs, and the public as a masterpiece, *Elijah* has not only continued to maintain the position so justly achieved, but has for many years past formed an inseparable adjunct to every festival of importance in the kingdom, and is scarcely outbid in general appreciation by Handel's no less imperishable work the *Messiah*. No wonder, then, at its birth-place the inhabitants think it a sacred duty to attend each triennial performance of the work whose name sheds a poetic halo over the otherwise prosaic seal of manufacturing industry. The distribution of the principal vocal music to-day was as follows:—in the first part, Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, soprano; Madame Patey-Whytock, contralto; Mr. W. H. Cummings, tenor—in the second part, Mdlle. Tietjens, Madame Sainton-Dolby, and Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Weiss sustaining the part of the Prophet, to which long usage appears to have given him a sort of prescriptive right. Since its first production I have heard *Elijah*—I should be afraid to say how many times—but never such a performance as that of this morning, it was from beginning to end absolutely marvellous; no language is capable of doing it justice. Those who attended the festival nine years since cherish an enduring recollection of *Elijah* upon that occasion, but the present representation has more than eclipsed any of its predecessors, and should live for ever in the memories of all who were fortunate enough to hear it. Principals, band, and chorus, seemed to vie with each other, and the result was, not to say unequalled, but unsurpassable. To enter into anything like a detailed analysis of such a performance is unnecessary, but as it is the first time that Madame Patey-Whytock has taken part in such an important meeting, a separate line of praise is justly due to this clever and rising lady for her admirable singing, which not only calls for recognition at the moment, but also holds forth abundant promise for the future. Mr. Cummings too displayed his nice artistic taste and feeling, and sang like a true musician, "If with all your heart" deserving special commendation. When I say that Mdlle. Tietjens, Mesdames Lemmens-Sherrington and Sainton-Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Weiss sang in a manner altogether worthy their well-earned reputation, I do no more than justice. The law forbidding any expression of applause on the part of the audience was rigidly carried out, but the effect of the music was none the less appreciable, the subdued murmur of delight and interchanging glances of appreciation showing very plainly what everyone felt in the large hall. There was but one piece encored, "O rest in the Lord," sung with such true devotional sentiment by Madame Sainton-Dolby (for whom Mendelssohn intended the contralto part when writing the oratorio), that the president rose and gave the signal for its repetition, and although objection may be fairly taken (on principle) to any one individual having an exclusive right of wielding arbitrary power in a matter to which the public at large should be entitled to a voice, I can hardly blame Earl Beauchamp for exercising his authority in this instance. If praise be due to singers and players what is to be said of Mr. Costa to whose transcendent ability as a conductor this magnificent performance was so largely due? No eulogy can be too high, and Birmingham should feel more than ever proud of having such a chief to direct its Triennial Festival which, through Mr. Costa, has been raised from a local to an European fame.

It has frequently fallen to my lot to have to speak in terms the reverse of laudatory, of the exceeding bad taste of a portion of the audience leaving during the chorus which concludes the first part, thus not only themselves losing one of the most magnificent pieces

in the entire work, but also entirely destroying the enjoyment of others more appreciative of music, and less eager for luncheon. To-day I am happy to record that no one moved until the end of "Thanks be to God;" it is to be hoped that so good a precedent may be invariably followed for the future. During the singing of the quartet, "Holy, holy," every one stood up, a custom not apparently guided by any fixed rule or known principle, but which seems to have gradually obtained recognition at various provincial festivals.

The number of persons present was 1,613. The receipt for tickets, £1,463 14s., which with amounts taken in the shape of donations and collections at the doors, £641 3s. 7d., gives a sum of £2,104 17s. 7d. as the result of the first morning, more than £500 in excess of the Tuesday morning in 1864, when £1,582 2s. 4d. was the total.

Wednesday, Aug. 28.

There is a law in existence (the provisions of which are strictly carried out) known as the "ten hours bill," and applicable to the workers in factories. Some such act should be passed limiting the duration of musical performances, and we should then be spared an infliction like the concert of last evening, which began at eight o'clock and did not end until nearly half an hour past midnight. A scheme of such length was positive injustice to everybody concerned, more particularly to the singers and players, who, the day previous, had been in the Town Hall for rehearsals some ten or eleven hours, and for whom no escape was possible. Their hearers were somewhat better off, inasmuch as they had the option of leaving when they chose, and so they gradually dropped off until the last half-dozen pieces in the programme were given to a room thinned of two thirds of its previous occupants—a fact not very encouraging to the artists, who are not remarkably fond of singing to empty benches.

The scheme commenced with Handel's *Alexander's Feast*, which formed a part of the attractions at the first Birmingham Festival ninety-nine years ago, having been given at the King Street Theatre on the 7th September, 1768. Last night Madame Lemmens Sherrington, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Weiss, sang the principal parts with credit to themselves and advantage to the work, which, with all possible respect for the name of Handel, and due admission of certain very fine numbers, I cannot but regard as being decidedly heavy, taken as a whole. The conclusion of the "Feast" (which occupied two hours) was the beginning—not of a fray—but of some confusion, inasmuch as many of the audience imagined that the first part of the concert was at an end, and consequently left their seats and went out. The result was that the first and second movements of Benedict's Concerto for Piano-forte, in E flat, were heard amidst the interruption of people again taking their places. How magnificently Madame Arabella Goddard interprets this truly great work (which was conducted by the composer) my readers need not be told, as they will probably have in mind her performance at the Crystal Palace and the Philharmonic Society, and it is sufficient to say the accomplished pianist played as she always does, superbly, and that the audience were proportionately delighted and enthusiastic.

The second part of the concert commenced at a quarter to eleven, and the following were the thirteen pieces set down:—

PART II.

Overture (<i>Oberon</i>)	...	...	...	Weber.
New Song—Mr. Santley—"When my thirsty soul"	...	...	...	Benedict.
Aria—Mdlle. Christine Nilsson—"In questo semplice" (<i>Belley</i>)	...	...	...	Donizetti.
T-rzett—Mdlle. Tietjens, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Santley—"Tremate empi Tremate"	...	...	...	Beethoven.
Valtz—Madame L. Sherrington—"Nella Calma" (<i>Roméo & Giulietta</i>)	...	...	...	Gounod.
Song—Mr. Sims Reeves—"My own, my guiding star" (<i>Robin Hood</i>)	...	...	...	Macfarren.
Fantasia, Piano-forte, on airs from <i>Masaniello</i> —Madame Arabella Goddard	...	...	...	Thalberg.
Scena—Mdlle. Tietjens—"Tacea la notte" (<i>Trovatore</i>)	...	...	...	Verdi.
Trio—Madame L. Sherrington, Madame Patey-Whytock, and Mr. Weiss—"Soave sia il vento" (<i>Così fan tutte</i>)	...	...	...	Mozart.
Ballad—Mr. Sims Reeves—"The Pilgrim of Love"	...	...	...	Bishop.
National Swedish Airs—Mdlle. Christine Nilsson.	...	...	...	...
Quartetto—Madame L. Sherrington, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Santley, and Mr. Weiss—"A te o cara" (<i>Puritani</i>)	...	...	...	Bellini.

Air—Madame Patey-Whytock—"Ere infancy's bud" (*Joseph*) Mehul.
Sestetto—Mdlle. Tietjens, Mdlle. C. Nilsson, Madame Patey-Whytock, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Santley, and Mr. Weiss—"Sola Sola" (*Don Giovanni*) Mozart.

All of these were done, and there was, fortunately, but one encore—namely for Mdlle. Nilsson, who met with a cordial welcome, which must have proved that if a stranger to them in person, the fair Swede was not unknown to the audience by reputation, and her *début* with the well-known Tyrolienne from *Betty* was a veritable triumph. Nor were the Swedish airs less to the taste of their hearers, who would probably have asked for a further repetition, but that the "witching hour of night" had already sounded. As a matter of course much applause followed Madame Goddard's brilliant playing of Thalberg's Fantasia, while Mr. Reeves' two songs conclusively proved that he was in full possession of his means despite his recent indisposition. Late as it was in the evening, Madame Patey-Whytock made a most favourable impression on the scant audience by the artistic singing of the air from Mehul's *Joseph*, and it was really deplorable to think that the grandest of concerted pieces, the *sestetto* from *Don Giovanni* should have served no better purpose than to play out the small remainder of the exhausted public.

My opinion as to Dr. Sterndale Bennett's new work has to-day been fully borne out by the unanimous verdict of an audience which not only filled every seat, but even made further standing room an impossibility in the large hall. Seldom has a more frank and genuine success been achieved than that of this morning—never was success more thoroughly deserved. *The Woman of Samaria* will go a long way to increase the already high reputation of the Cambridge Professor, and, while certain to find favour with musicians, is no less sure to please that very numerous section of the public who are capable of appreciating music at once elegant, refined, and masterly. Time, space, and the amount of work yet to be done (to say nothing of the late hour at which the morning performance concluded), forbid an attempt at anything like a detailed analysis of *The Woman of Samaria*, but one or two particular "numbers" must be here enumerated; notably the air for soprano (Mdlle. Tietjens), "Art Thou greater than our father Jacob;" that for contralto (Madame Sainton-Dolby), "O Lord Thou hast searched me out;" the air for tenor (Mr. Cummings), "His salvation is nigh them that fear Him;" the chorus for six voice parts, "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion;" the chorus (or rather chorale), "Abide with us," of which the first verse is sung by the sopranos, the second by the altos and tenors, with *pizzicato* accompaniment by the strings, and the last verse with full orchestral force, and the final chorus, "Blessed be the Lord," ending with a fugue treated with the hand of a master. All of these call for special praise, and three were repeated at the desire of the president, viz.,—the contralto air—a gem amongst gems, sung with the most touching pathos and perfect expression by Madame Sainton-Dolby; the six-voice chorus, and the tenor air, rendered by Mr. Cummings with his usual care and correctness. It is much to be regretted that Dr. Bennett did not conduct his own work, although Mr. Cusins, who acted in his stead, deserves the greatest credit for the extreme pains he took, and the highly satisfactory result in a performance which left but little to be desired, and was in every respect infinitely better than could have been anticipated considering that the work was not completed until the end of last week, and the principal singers (among whom Mr. Santley must not be forgotten) had not their parts till Sunday evening. While bestowing commendation on soloists, band, and chorus, a word of censure must not be omitted for the organ, which, more than once, behaved in a most unseemly manner by ciphering and producing an effect the reverse of harmonious or agreeable. At the conclusion of the cantata the bonds of the absurd conventionality which forbids applause were burst asunder, and there was a most unmistakable demonstration of opinion, not only on the part of the audience but of the whole orchestra, one and all uniting in loud cries of "Bennett," which shortly brought the Cambridge Professor to the platform, when peal upon peal of "bravos" rang out from every one present. Among the audience I observed a great number of well-known London musical professors, who had come down expressly to hear the work, and who were by no means the least vehement in their expression of hearty approval.

The remainder of this morning's programme was *Judas Maccæ-*

bæus, in which the principal parts were sustained by Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Mdle. Nilsson, Madame Patey-Whytock, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Weiss. Taken altogether, a finer performance of the "Jewish" oratorio has rarely if ever been heard,—the choruses were something wonderful, and went with the band as it had been but one man,—and so it was in a certain sense, for it was due to one—a "capable man" as Carlyle would say—Mr. Costa, whose commanding energy has never been more vividly exemplified than at this Festival. Much curiosity was manifested to know how the clever young Swede, who has at once taken so firm a hold of the British public, would acquit herself in oratorio, it being her first appearance in that school of music. All doubts on the subject were soon set aside, her first air, "Pious orgies," at once setting the question in her favour. "O Liberty," "From mighty kings" (repeated at request of the President), and "Wise men flattering," were all no less successful, and although Mdle. Nilsson may yet have much to learn before she becomes in all respects a perfect exponent of sacred music, such as that of Handel, there is no question that she has already proved herself a most desirable and welcome addition to the first rank of oratorio singers. The tenor part in *Judas* is one that Mr. Reeves has made essentially his own, and fortunately this morning he was able to do himself full justice, "Call forth thy powers," and "Sound an alarm," being declaimed with all his accustomed power, and producing an effect almost electrical, while the florid air so thoroughly opposite in character, "How vain is man," was no less admirably given. Mr. Weiss, too, displayed his usual energy, and exerted himself with commendable result, more particularly in the famous airs, "Arm, arm, ye brave," and "The Lord worketh wonders."

I have already mentioned that to-day four pieces were repeated at the request of the President, whose will appears to be law, and who has only to hold up his book to command an encore, while the public, who have no less paid their money, and should be equally entitled to a voice in the matter, are bound tongue and hand, and not allowed to give any expression of opinion at the morning's performance. Were the Festival held in a church or cathedral I could understand such a restriction, anything to the contrary in such an edifice would be unseemly and not decent; but the Town Hall of Birmingham is a secular building, and I see no reason whatever why the audience have not as perfect a right as the President to express what they think on the subject. The present regulation is an utter absurdity, and the sooner it is done away with the better. I do not know whether the honourable member for Birmingham was present (I should hardly think that Mr. Bright had much music in his soul), but, if so, his views to the representation of minorities must have been strongly confirmed by the illustration of a minority of one having power over the votes (or voices) of more than two thousand persons.

The numbers present were 2,223. The receipts £1,987 18s., to which add donations £103 14s. 5d., and you have £2,091 12s. 5d. against £2,066 17s. 3d., the Wednesday morning of 1864.

Thursday, Aug. 29.

Although too long by at least one half hour, the concert of last night was of more moderate proportions than that of Tuesday, and (two pieces being excised) terminated at half-past eleven, so that those who attended both morning and evening had only between eight and nine hours music! As the programme stood originally, the first part was miscellaneous, and the second entirely devoted to Benedict's *St. Cecilia*, an arrangement so flagrantly violating the proper order of things that it is quite surprising such an idea should have ever been for one moment entertained. Fortunately the committee saw (or had pointed out to them) this mistake, which was, of course, rectified, and the place of honour assigned to the cantata, which had already been performed with such triumphant success at Norwich (where it was originally produced last year), and subsequently in London, where it was received with no less favour. Upon taking his place in the orchestra as conductor, yesterday evening, Mr. Benedict was warmly welcomed, and at the close of the work recalled, with a spontaneous cordiality abundantly evidencing that the Birmingham people were to the full as appreciative as either East Anglians or Metropolitans. The principal solo parts were sustained by Mdle. Tietjens, Madame

Sainton-Dolby, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Santley. The first-named lady but too plainly showed that the most severe work, combined with a cold, had produced a temporarily damaging effect upon her voice, and although she taxed herself to the utmost, and with success, more particularly in the exceptionally exacting *finale*, where there is such an important call upon the upper notes, it was evidently at a great sacrifice, and with considerable exertion, that Mdle. Tietjens was enabled to get through her music, and an apology was subsequently made for her inability to appear in the miscellaneous portion of the concert. *Au reste*, the already named tenor, contralto, and baritone acquitted themselves as usual—that is to say, admirably. Whether from insufficient rehearsal, over-work, or what other cause I know not, the chorus were not fully up to the high standard of excellence hitherto exhibited, and the work as a whole might have been better performed than it was on this occasion. I wonder whether any of the authorities here who forbid applause, explain the difference between a performance in the morning and one in the evening. Some sagacious reader will probably reply, "The one takes place by day light, the other by gas light." So far that is satisfactory and so self-evident that if such answer is left to be taken as final the question need never have been asked. But I want to know why Mr. Benedict's *St. Cecilia*, which at Norwich was played in the morning among works of a religious character, and afterwards given at Exeter Hall by the Sacred Harmonic Society, where there is also a regulation (constantly broken through) against applause, now that it is performed in the evening, may be applauded a *discretion* just as if it were a piece in an ordinary concert? Is the work sacred or secular? If the former, then the same rule which would have applied to it if forming a part of the morning scheme should have held equally good when it was given in the evening. If no other argument were wanted, this alone should suffice to expose the weakness and absurdity of the present code applying to such subjects. After *St. Cecilia* came Dr. Sterndale Bennett's Pianoforte Concerto No. 4, in F minor, remarkably well conducted by Mr. Cusins, and played by Madame Arabella Goddard as she alone can play it. Where each of the three movements is alike beautiful, one is at a loss which to admire most; but, personally, I own a preference to the second, the exquisite melody of which haunts one like a delirious dream. Instead of expressing any further opinion of my own as to Madame Arabella Goddard's playing, I will give an extract from the *Birmingham Daily Post*, which has published a series of articles on the Birmingham Festival very far in advance of the usual run of provincial criticism, and evidently written by a musician who understands his subject. The first notice relates to Benedict's, the second to Bennett's concerto:—

"The cantata was followed by the pianoforte performance of Madame Arabella Goddard, whose appearance on the little instrumental platform devoted to pianistic displays was welcomed with loud and general acclamations. The concerto, which was conducted by the composer in person, is of rather larger proportions than customary with works of English origin of the same class, but its beauties and exalted sentiment fully justify the elaboration. It is in three movements—the first a brilliant, florid, graceful *allegro moderato*, giving great prominence to the solo instrument; the second *andante*, a sweet, dreamy, poetical movement, of great refinement and delicacy, and with only one fault—its exceeding brevity. The third movement, *allegretto*, is the most ambitious, most impassioned, and most meritorious section of the concerto, and the spirit and fire displayed by Madame Goddard in its execution last night, seconded, as that performance was, by the orchestra, bought its manifold beauties into vivid relief. Time and space forbid our attempting any review of this brilliant display of executive power and musicianly feeling; but we may state that its effect upon the musical portion of the audience was of the most marked and flattering character, and that the fair artist retired from the platform amid a storm of congratulatory plaudits."

"We are sorry that the extreme length of the evening concerts, the late hour at which they conclude, and the necessity imposed upon us by custom, of noticing all the features of the performance, prevent our devoting that attention to the admirable pianoforte displays of Madame Arabella Goddard, which they so richly merit. Of her performance of Bennett's splendid fourth concerto last night, much might be written, but in the very limited time and space at our disposal, we can only say in general terms that a finer exhibition of executive skill, combined with genuine artistic feeling, we have never beheld (?). The few really musical people present were in raptures, and even those least susceptible to the charms of instrumental art could not steel their sympathies

against the seductive sweetness and brilliancy of the barcarole. The queen of the keyboard received, as usual, a right royal reception from the audience both at the commencement and conclusion of her effort."

The miscellaneous section, or second part of the programme, was as follows:—

Overture (<i>Leonora</i>)	Beethoven.
Duo—Mademoiselle Christine Nilssen and Mr. Santley— "Pronto io son" (<i>Don Pasquale</i>)	Donizetti.
Song—Mr. Sims Reeves—"Adelaida." (Pianoforte accompaniment by Madame Arabella Goddard)	Beethoven.
Aria—Mdlle. Christine Nilssen—"Gli angui d'inferno" (<i>Il Flauto Magico</i>)	Mozart.*
Prize Glee—Madame Sainton-Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Santley—"Oh how much more doth beautie beauteous seeme"	Earl Beauchamp.*
Aria—Madame Lemmens-Sherrington—"Deh vieni non tardar" (<i>Le Nozze di Figaro</i>)	Mozart.
Song—Mr. Weiss—"I am not old"	Hatton.
Scena ed Aria—Madame Patey-Whytock—"Che' farò" (<i>Orfeo</i>)	Gluck
Romanza—Mdlle. Christine Nilssen—"Vergin Rosa" (<i>Marta</i>)	Flotow.*
Quartetto—Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Madame Patey-Whytock, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Weiss—"Un di se ben rammentomi" (<i>Rigoletto</i>)	Verdi.

The pieces marked with an asterisk were encored and repeated, the prize glee of Earl Beauchamp (the President of the Festival) certainly not on account of its execution, which (with all respect to those who took part in it) might have been very much better sung than it was the first time. The repeat was, however, an improvement. How Mr. Sims Reeves sings "Adelaida," and how Mdlle. Arabella Goddard also sings (I use the term advisedly) that lovely melody my readers (more especially those who attend the Monday Popular Concerts) need not be told; and it is scarcely necessary to say that the audience demonstrated more convincingly the fact that they were fully alive to the merits of both these great artists. Again did Mdlle. Nilssen more than confirm the highly favourable impression she had previously created, distinguishing herself alike in the terrifically trying air of "Astrafiamante," from Mozart's mystic but lovely opera, and the simple melody which Flotow has so unblushingly appropriated, and to which his opera of *Marta* is so largely indebted. The remaining pieces call for no comment, beyond stating that they were all received with more or less favour. The hall was much fuller than on the previous evening, 1570 persons being present.

The weather, which on Tuesday was lovely and yesterday looked at times threatening, a few slight drops occasionally falling, has to-day asserted itself more positively, and there has been a good deal of rain, which, with a heavy clouded atmosphere and the normal smoky canopy of Birmingham (compared with which London's skies are Neapolitan) has made the out-door aspect the reverse of exhilarating. Nevertheless, the *Messiah* has exercised its unfailing spell, and every available place has been appropriated by a throng eager and delighted to do homage to Handel's imperishable work, to which any detailed inference is unnecessary, beyond stating that the performance was inapproachable throughout, and that the principal solo parts were sustained by Mdlle. Lemmens Sherrington, Mdlle. Tietjens (who sang in the third part only), Mdlle. Sainton-Dolby, Mdlle. Patey-Whytock, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Santley, and that Mdlle. Lemmens Sherrington repeated "How beautiful are the feet," and Mdlle. Tietjens "I know that my Redeemer liveth," both at the request of the President.

Up to the present I have not received the official returns of the number present this morning, but should say at least 2500. To-night Mr. J. F. Barnett's cantata, *The Ancient Mariner* will be given. To-morrow morning M. Gounod's *Messe Solennelle* in G and *Israel in Egypt*, and in the evening Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*, will bring to a close one of the most successful festivals on record. These latter performances can only find their place in next week's issue.

DRINKWATER HARD.

COLOGNE.—In consideration of the services rendered by him to the cause of vocal music, Herr Franz Weber has been created, by the King of the Belgians, a Knight of the Order of Leopold.

Histoire de Palmerin d'Olive filz du Roy FLORENDOS de MACEDONE et de LA BELLE GRIANE, fille de Remielus, Empereur de Constantinople, by Jean Mangin, dit le Petit Jeunein. A perfect copy of this extremely rare ROMANCE to be sold for TWENTY-NINE GUINEAS. Enquire of DUNCAN DAVISON & Co., 241, Regent Street, W.

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BIRTH.

On the 29th inst., at her father's residence, Park Road, Regent's Park, the wife of EMILE BERGER, Esq., of a daughter.

DEATHS.

On the 18th inst., at her residence, 28, Abingdon Villas, Kensington, Mdlle. RITA FAVANTI, vocalist, formerly of Her Majesty's Theatre, deeply and sincerely regretted by many friends.

On the 24th inst., at Margate, Mr. THOMAS GARDNER, Professor of Music, and proprietor of the Royal Assembly Rooms, aged 55.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1867.

EUSEBIUS AND FLORESTAN,

ON LAYMAN AND PRIEST, ON CRITICISM AND SUCH-LIKE.*

(Concluded from page 580.)

FLORESTAN. A pleasant piece of consolation! Names are mere sound and smoke.

EUSEBIUS. But a tolerably intelligible sound, as your celebrated master himself taught you, seeing that he caused you to utter an appropriate word, or words, for every new impression.

FLORESTAN. Mock! You used not to be edified by this Berlin method.

EUSEBIUS. Exactly. Would you have an infallible receipt for infallible criticism, a rule, as if made by line and compass: look to it yourself. Or see how others do, who enjoy a good reputation with the people. The people, however—well, that which the world wants of criticism varies: one man wants amusement for digestion, another seeks a convenient price-list of marketable wares, which he may purchase in safety; the minority seek instruction, advancement in knowledge. Let us take hold of the thing by the other end! What does criticism want? What does the honourable critic want? or, to speak more correctly, what does he do? He begins by contemplating the Given; attempts to repeat it in his soul; traces out the motives; and endeavours to frame the motive of the motive in a system. Contemplation effects impression and after-impression—reflection wants to penetrate deeper to the roots of contemplation, wants thoughtfully and knowingly to appropriate the subject of contemplation, for all men possess a natural leaning towards knowledge.

FLORESTAN. You seem to be at last in earnest, so I will quietly listen till I understand the matter; only not too many *philosophica* from the speculative language of the schools, which makes one's hair stand on end.

EUSEBIUS. Do not grow alarmed, if I appear to be speculative, while I am really walking on level ground. If I say for instance: all knowledge thoroughly learnt is, at the same time, logical, historical, and mystic, your hair will stand on end; but this is only a shorter way of putting the longer form: the art of thinking thoroughly moves uniformly in the three regions of knowing, willing, and feeling; knowledge thoroughly learnt contains three forms: that of pure Thought; that of the traditionally Experienced; and that of the superabundantly Creative. The critic will, there-

* From the *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung*.

fore, according to the measure given him, let thinking, experience, and independent impression work on each other. You will here say: yes, all, who are not entirely godless, desire, or fancy they desire, this; yet there are reviewers weaker or better than others, good or bad, just as there are good and wretched poets.

FLORESTAN. The line between good and bad is certainly often imperceptible. Can you show me the line where virtue becomes vice—valour, cruelty; economy, avarice; and love, lewdness?

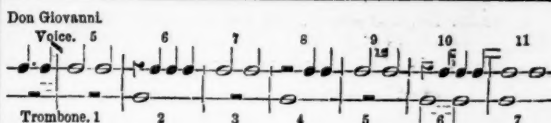
EUSEBIUS. The line between Good and Evil is conscience. It is true you cannot perceive any visible mark; it is as invisible as the equator, which young squire Urian imagined to be a thick, dark line, but did not find even in beautiful Negroland. The most real things, however, are sometimes invisible, as that advocate of principles, the wise Guizot, says. Yet all beings know of God and Evil; all except those with a speculative intestinal bellows. Fortunately they are now less dangerous than in their palmy days.

FLORESTAN. If that is the case, why are you so wrathful with them? they are not worthy of your wrath, unless you have secret reasons for fearing them.

EUSEBIUS. As long as Evil is not driven out of the world, we must fear and combat it. It is for this reason that I combat criticism which indulges in registering the applause bestowed on a *prima donna*, and the title-roles of the soloists; which burns incense in praise of all of them, and, in addition, offers a vote of thanks to the manager—without bestowing a single syllable on the arrangement of what is represented, far less of the general purport, of the intellectual course of the work, and of the soul-streams of its re-echo; these penny-a-liners rise, at most, to the criticism of *dynamics*, I mean the enumeration of the signs of interpunctuation with *f*, *p*, and *crescendo*, of the scholastic rules on execution, "vocal means," &c. What this critical brood desires is: first to obtain the penny, and then to excite attention. Perfect works do not need this, because they attract attention, and captivate the mind of themselves. To prefer *dynamics* to *purport* has ever been the quintessence of the virtuosity of puffing. A short time since you said: "What good is it to me that a cigar be well rolled up, if there is no tobacco inside?" That was *dynamics* without substance. Our old organist used to say: "Look here! Mozart! there is music in him! the people did not play particularly well, but they cannot kill him."

FLORESTAN. So, that is your critical Ideal, is it? To demonstrate purport, track ideas, and expound works of art by the idea inherent in them! Very praiseworthy, but what is praiseworthy is rare. Besides, you are an art-critic yourself, and not always contented with what is praiseworthy. When, recently, the trombones in the *finale* to *Don Juan* were cleverly criticised, you were not pleased. You said the critic meant well, and was not one of the worst, but had acted according to Goethe's maxim: "*Legt ihr's nicht aus, so legt ihr's unter.*"

EUSEBIUS. I meant still more: I meant he possessed knowledge, and a love of the subject, and so his words deserved to be heard, but that he ought not to go against the accredited tradition in order to lend weight to an individual idea, an incidental dislike, especially as he, the practised critic, had previously been favourably affected by the first impression produced by these trombones. Would he had remained faithful to this natural impression! Even great poets are generally most successful with their first notions; and just so are laymen with their first comprehension of a thing. Should the critic be better than these two? Is not, moreover, the rhythmic of these trombones perfectly intelligible, nay, brilliantly beautiful, and the only one appropriate, seeing that it answers in continuous progress, as rhythmical sound-contrast, as demoniacal re-echo, so that what is apparently synoptic appears perfectly rational, when you perceive the double structure:



FLORESTAN. That was a piece of arch-criticism! I am almost inclined to agree with you; but I feel curious to know who is right in the long run.

EUSEBIUS. I select this example as belonging to those which, though erroneous, strive to attain the truth, and consequently help to advance the latter; for what is honourably intended always advances a subject. It is for this reason that I would have the simple voice of the people, whenever we come across it, heard and not despised; it is quite different with red democracy that despises while flattering, from cowardice and greed, the people. We hear a great deal said, at present, about "Standpoints," or the position to be taken up in various cases. The right position to be taken up by art is that it should be beautiful; the right comprehension of it, that we should receive beauty joyfully into our hearts, and hold in abhorrence what is the reverse; the former frees and elevates, the latter circumscribes and degrades our souls. It is said: *Comprehension* is an exceedingly comparative matter; so be it. But I then ask: for what kind of comprehension are the high works of the real masters presented to us, for the artist, the manager, the co-operator, and the critic, or for the simple comprehension of the auditor desirous of art? It was recently asserted that the idea of church or sacred matters was relative, and that what was sacred, or what not, could not be properly explained. It was observed that Mozart and Haydn were good Catholics, and, moreover, pious men; therefore Reactionists were disgracefully wrong in considering their masses unsacred, or unchurchlike—in fact, the sacred element was nothing more than a certain *frame of mind*, melancholy exaltation, mysterious stillness, the fumes of incense behind painted windows—*voilà tout*, says the Frenchman. To us, who are not yet of opinion that the Church ought to regulate itself by the particular state of our civilization, such Parisian ejaculations appear comical. In cases of doubt, we hold to the rule: By their fruit shall ye know them. We might, however, determine *what* hearers were more moved than others by this or that, and wherefore; going higher: *what* song was productive of more devotion; and what kind, of more absence of mind; and, going to the highest point of all: *what sort* of song bound up the most different hearts in one sensation, so that pious and worldly people should say *unanimously*: that is pious, that sounds holy, that fills the soul. Such musical compositions exist, despite all that the Standpointists, the Red and the Blue, the speculative Nihilists, the Radicals and Pietists, may say to the contrary. We remarked—and even you agreed with me wonderfully—unanimity of this description at our performance of Eccard and Hassler, of Vittoria and Palestrina—a unity of sentiment in the domain of the idea, the complete opposite to the vain ambiguity of distraction, such as is always the accompaniment of Rossini's *Stabat*, and Jacob Meyerbeer's *Huguenot* Chorale and Priestly Fanaticism.

FLORESTAN. Right! These points I grant you. But all this does not settle the far more frequent cases of doubt, when criticism first begins to be really critical. Works that are completely beautiful or ugly are definite and leave little room for doubt; anyone who praises *Don Juan* is merely carrying water to the sea.* On the other hand, to assign its right place to that which is not so definite, to that which is supportable, to that which is not to be entirely rejected—this is a difficult task for which you possess no receipt.

* In English idiom: "is merely carrying coals to Newcastle."

EUSEBIUS. No, that is true! In that case I seek assistance in the human method which Goethe teaches us (G. W. 38, 254, after Manzoni): "We must consider three things: What has the poet proposed to himself? Is that which he wishes reasonable? Has he carried out what he wishes?" These are really the comprehensive principles, which, in the main, all sound criticism, aiming at the maintenance of truth and beauty, has ever followed. A warm feeling of the first impression, a heart sensible to the darker depths, and an educated and experienced understanding are the foundations of that judgment that should work in time as scientific criticism. If you assert such gifts are seldom combined, the same is the case with all good things. Therefore let us take care not to reject everything which does not attain this perfection; provided there is only the love of truth in it, and, therefore, true soul for beauty—let it stammer on! Truth attracts truth; when humility exists between High and Low, it is wonderful how quickly men come to an understanding among themselves, and those the same men of whom it is generally said: So many men, so many minds!

"Der Schnuscht rauscht der Schönheit Quelle,
Der Demuth Scheint die Wahrheit helle."

Cease plaguing me about the last word—about a correct, tenable, trichord definition of genuine criticism—unless you first prove to me what is meant by thinking, and everything connected with it, whence the action of thinking springs and whether it goes. However, I am ready to give any information in my power in reply to any questions—

FLORESTAN. A charming conclusion! But I am ready to continue our pitch-in, till one of us cries: "O! Hold! Enough!"—What do you say to our shortly having a match of running at the ring, to see which shall bring forth the best criticism on Schumann?

EUSEBIUS. Your very obedient servant! As willing to oblige as ever! Meanwhile, in order that you may see that it is not alone our discussions that run on without end, read old Plato over again; he, too, indulges in apparently endless conversations, but they have all a tolerably palpable aim. This evening let us read together his *Republic*, Book 6, pp. 490, 497, 500, where, in cases of doubt, the greater blame is thrown on the teachers, if the coy folk is foolish. And, in addition to every thing else—are you not aware that we live in the "age of transition, of the opposites of development," and so forth, as the Red and the Blue party unanimously assure us (though other learned Thebans say that things were so in all times). The world is full of contradictions; shall criticism be free from them?

FLORESTAN. Good-bye till this evening. We will then resume the subject.

HERR HENSELT, the celebrated Russian composer, gave a piano-forte performance yesterday morning, at Broadwood's Rooms, Great Pulteney Street, in presence of a large concourse of amateurs and professors. The pieces selected by Herr Henselt were Weber's Sonata in A flat (last movement); Weber's *Hilarité* and *Concert-Stück* (the latter arranged by himself); Liszt's "Rhapsodie"; Chopin's second Scherzo, and his Nocturnes in D flat and C minor; Zwei *Fantasie-Stück*, by Schumann; and some pieces of his own composition, comprising the study, "Si Oiseau J'étais," *Valse Melancolique* and *Frühlingslied*, "Thanksgiving after a Storm," "La Fontaine," "Liebeslied," &c. &c. The popular study "Si Oiseau J'étais" was unanimously encored and repeated. Herr Henselt, as the readers of the *Musical World* have been already apprised, was sometime since ennobled by the Emperor, and decorated with the Vladimir Cross.

VIENNA.—Mdlle. Ilma de Murska, the capricious and remarkable cantatrice, has so far triumphed over the director of the Imperial Theatre as to induce him to come to terms. Mdlle. de Murska has been re-engaged for five months, at a salary of 2,300 florins per month, the engagement to commence on the first of November. She is to sing eight times a month.

AGRICULTURAL HALL.

Mr. F. Kingsbury, not satisfied with the variety, almost unparalleled, of the attractions already offered, has added this week to his list of singers Miss Louisa Pyne and Mr. Lewis Thomas, so that altogether the array of vocal talent is very strong, the vocalists heretofore including the names of Mdlle. Liebhart, Miss Julia Derby, and Mr. Wilbye Cooper. On Tuesday we again visited the "Fairy Palace" at Islington. Nearly ten thousand persons, as we understood, were present, and the majority seemed to have come purposely to enjoy the music, if so be we may be allowed to infer from the enthusiasm with which most of the pieces were received. Miss Louisa Pyne twice sang and twice created a *furor*, both her songs—"Sweet spirit hear my prayer," from *Lurline*, and "The Last Rose of Summer"—being vociferously encored. A selection from the *Troatore* was given, comprising the cavatina in *Leonora*, "Tacea la notte," sung with great dramatic power by Mdlle. Liebhart; the air of Manrico, "Ah! si ben mio," by Mr. Wilbye Cooper; air of the gipsy, "Stride la vampa," by Miss Julia Derby; the Gipsy chorus; duet, "Si la stanchezza," by Miss Julia Derby and Mr. Wilbye Cooper; air of the Count de Luna, "Il balen," by Mr. Lewis Thomas, capitally sung and uproariously encored; and the "Miserere," by Mdlle. Liebhart, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and chorus—the last piece, more particularly, creating immense excitement. Another very taking affair was the "Leviathan (?) Polka," played with remarkable effect on the cornet by Mr. Levy, who, being encored, substituted Signor Guglielmo's very sparkling and animated "Levy Waltz," which was even more to the taste of the audience, who applauded it with great warmth. "The British Army Quadrille" remains the great feature of the performances and is likely to do so for some weeks to come. In the meanwhile Mr. Kingsbury, alive to the necessity of providing novelty, brought out another composition from the pen of Jullien on Wednesday, to which even more interest attaches than to the "Army Quadrille," inasmuch as it was the best work of the popular maestro. This was a grand selection from *Der Freischütz*. Of this performance we cannot speak this week, but shall give particulars in our next.

COVENT GARDEN CONCERTS.

The second "Classical Night," on Thursday, was set apart for Haydn and Weber. The principal pieces were: overture to *Preciosa* (Weber); air and variations, "God preserve the Emperor," from the quartet in G, performed by all the stringed instruments (Haydn); *Concert-Stück* for pianoforte (Weber); and Military Symphony, No. 12 (Haydn). Madame Julia Wolff played Weber's *Concert-Stück*. The vocal pieces were Haydn's canzonet, "My mother bids me bind my hair," sung by Mdlle. Sarolta, and the air, "A lonely Arab maid," from *Oberon*, sung by Mdlle. Eracleo.

The music in the miscellaneous part seemed more to the liking of the audience, who, while listening with something like indifference to the excerpts from Haydn's and Weber's works, were enthusiastic in their applause of the selection from M. Gounod's *Romeo e Giulietta*, and encored five solos in succession—Signor Mattiozi's polka, "Godiamo," sung by Mdlle. Sarolta; the *valse* "Frühlings-Bluthen" (Spring-flower), by Herr Johann Strauss; a Spanish song by Senor Yradier, sung by Mdlle. Eracleo; fantasia for pianoforte on *Faust*, played by Mr. Wehli; and Strauss's "Anna" polka.

The "Classical Night" on Thursday next will be devoted to Beethoven, and will comprise the Pastoral Symphony.

LISZT arrived at Weimar last week to superintend the rehearsals of his oratorio, *Sainte-Elizabeth*, which was to have been performed at Wartburg, on the 28th of this month.

EGYPTIAN HALL, PICCADILLY.—Mr. Frederick Maccabe, the popular mimic and ventriloquist, will commence a series of performances of his musical, dramatic, and ventriloquial entertainment, *Begone, dull Care*, at the above hall, on Monday evening.

MR. SCHOTT OF MAYENCE.—The King of Prussia, on his recent visit to Mayence, bestowed the Order of the Crown on Mr. Francis Schott, head of the well-known publishing firm. Mr. Schott is counsellor to the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt, and mayor of the above-mentioned place.

DR. STERNDALÉ BENNETT'S "WOMAN OF SAMARIA."

The first impression made upon most minds by the news that Sterndale Bennett had undertaken to write a work for the Birmingham Festival was one of unqualified pleasure. Wherever and whenever men discuss the condition of English music they speak of the foremost English musician with a mixture of pride and disappointment—pride in his great talents and in the undying works he has given to the art, disappointment that those works are so few and far between. The promise of an addition to the number, therefore, was not only welcomed for itself, but accepted with a zest in proportion to its regretted rarity.

If this was the first impression, the next was one of doubt as to the merit of the selected subject. The story of the Samaritan woman seemed so barren of dramatic interest, so little likely to awaken sympathy, and to afford such small scope for musical treatment, that the composer's warmest admirers might well have been excused for doubting the result of his effort. This they would have done beyond question, had they foreseen the plan upon which the book is constructed. Nothing could well be more simple, or less *ad captandum*. Had the librettist so pleased he might have taken liberties with the narrative either by expanding and intensifying its incidents, or by the introduction of characters not found in the sacred text. In either case he would have been supported by precedent, and the result from a musical point of view, would have appeared more encouraging. But the librettist did nothing of the sort. He simply took the words of the evangelist John just as he found them, and, beginning with the 5th verse of the fourth chapter, incorporated the whole narrative (a short passage excepted), down to verse 42. Here and there, however, he has interpolated words from other parts of Scripture, and, in one place, three verses of John Keble's famous hymn, "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide," appear somewhat intrusively, but, under the circumstances, no one would wish them away. From this it is easy to see how entirely the success of the work depended upon Dr. Bennett's music. Sometimes a composer is fortunate in having a libretto which of itself goes a long way towards securing acceptance for his work, among those at least who judge by feeling and not by thought. Interest may be quickened, and sympathy aroused by the action of the story, or by the characteristics of the actors, and thus the excited imagination of the listeners may gloss over the shortcomings of the musician. In the case of the *Woman of Samaria* there could be nothing like this. The action of the narrative is of the most prosaic order, and in personal interest it is singularly deficient. Nobody feels the slightest sympathy with the woman, who was a very common-place individual; and Jesus, who so often appears in circumstances arousing the intensest feeling, is here little more than a doctor of theology. Clearly, therefore, the music rests for success upon its own unaided merit. But this is not all. The character of the subject is one likely to tax a composer's resources to the utmost. The discussion between the Saviour and the woman touches upon the most profound of religious truths. The "great gift" of salvation, the omniscience, universality, and spirituality of the Deity in turn present themselves as topics for conversation. Themes like these are not easily handled by the musician. They require an exalted dignity, a profound feeling, and a power of expression, to say nothing of a technical knowledge of the most difficult style of the art, which are very rarely found in combination. Dr. Bennett's task was, therefore, one not to be lightly undertaken. Now that he has succeeded, it is more just and necessary to bear this in mind than it would have been had he failed.

In point of construction, the *Woman of Samaria* follows accepted models. That is to say, the comments upon such incidents as occur are made by the chorus, and the narrative passages are so divided as clearly to distinguish the several characters. Thus the words of the Lord are given to the bass voice, those of the woman to the soprano, and the connecting sentences of the evangelist are allotted to the contralto. As much of individuality is secured by this arrangement as circumstances made possible. The "numbers" in the work are twenty-one. Of these ten are given to the chorus, three are regularly constructed airs (for soprano, contralto, and tenor respectively), and the rest recitatives, many of which are so accompanied and written in such

a *cantabile* style as to have a special importance. Not a single "number" is unworthy of notice, but I must content myself with a reference only to the chief among the twenty-one.

The "introduction and chorale" give a fair promise of what is to follow. The former opens with an *andante serioso* in A minor, three-eight time, leading to an *andante quasi allegretto* in the same key, one being plaintive, the other agitated and impassioned, and both full of character. A *pedal* on the dominant of C major at length introduces the chorales (the subject of the *allegretto* still going on) for voices in unison. This chorale—which is the one known as "Luther's Hymn"—by a clever use of syncopation has the effect of being sung in common time against the triple measure of the orchestra. That effect is in the highest degree striking, without being at all confused. As given on Wednesday at Birmingham, the melody stood out in massive grandeur against the ingenious back-ground which the composer's art had provided for it, and the whole predisposed everybody present in favour of what was to come. At the close of the chorale the *andante serioso* returns, in combination with the theme of the *allegretto*, and the "Introduction" finished in the key of its opening. The contralto voice then commences the sacred narrative with the words, "Then cometh Jesus to a city of Samaria," and is followed by a chorus—A major, common time—"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel," which is of larger proportions than usual. The leading theme is first given out by the sopranos, then repeated in harmony, and afterwards taken up by the basses and altos successively. Ending in the tonic key, the first part is followed by a striking episode, in C major, full of bold and massive harmonies. The return to the leading theme, by a repetition of the word "Blessed," is beautifully done, and from thence to the end (as, indeed, all through) the chorus is pure devotional music of the highest order. The coming of the woman is next told in recitative; the words of Jesus, "He would have given thee living water," being followed by a short solidly written chorus—*adagio*, D major, common time—"For with Thee is the well of life." In this there is happily mingled a beauty almost tender, with a masculine breadth of style which would have delighted the old Church musicians. The conjunction is as uncommon as it is agreeable. Another short recitative then introduces the soprano air (in B minor), "Art Thou greater than our father Jacob?" This I take to be the weak part of the work, the "fly in the pot of ointment," though, happily, a well-nigh innocuous one. The impression made by one hearing is that it is uninteresting, and by no means in keeping with what precedes and follows. The narrative goes on after this, with here and there most expressive recitative, to the point where Jesus tells the woman of her past misdeeds. A passage from the psalms, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and know me," is then interpolated, set as a contralto air. This is one of the gems of the work, and neither the present generation nor those to follow will willingly let it die. As a religious melody it is a model, whether looked at for the beauty of its melody, its true devotional expression, or the depth of feeling it embodies. So thoroughly pure a specimen of its kind has not been heard since "O rest in the Lord." Following the declaration that the Father must be worshipped "in spirit and in truth," occurs a chorus in six parts—B flat, common time—"Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion." This is another gem. The sopranos (divided) and contraltos open with a flowing theme in harmony, and are answered by the tenors and basses (divided). After a little more antiphony all the parts unite, their grand and solid harmonies upon the words, "For wheat and for wine, for wine and for oil" telling with fine effect. At this point the chorus culminates, the remainder to the passage, "They shall not sorrow any more at all"—fading off to a *pianissimo* in gentle strains of almost ravishing beauty. All through this charming number the strings have a *pizzicato* figure in accompaniment, which adds materially to the effect produced. The declaration of Jesus, "I that speak unto thee am He," heralds a short chorus—*adagio*, E minor, common time—"Who is the Image of the Invisible God." The organ alone accompanies this, and its grave severe style can therefore be imagined. That the chorus will find a welcome among lovers of true church music there can be no doubt, and its simplicity puts it within

the reach of the most ordinary choir. The recitative next tells of the woman's return to Sychar, and her invitation to her neighbours to come and see Jesus. Then follows a chorus—E flat, minor, common time—"Come, O Israel, let us walk as sons of light." After a fashion which he seems to love, the composer announces the theme in unison (trebles and tenors), repeating it afterwards in full harmony. Contrasting with its flowing beauty is an episode to the words, "Not as children of darkness," most aptly expressing the idea of the text by its sombre harmonies. The tenors then repeat the subject, after which a series of bold progressions, brings the chorus to a close. The incident of the Saviour's abiding at Sychar for two days serves to introduce the hymn before mentioned. Dr. Bennett has set the verses in G minor, common time—first as a duet for sopranos and contraltos, next as a trio, subject in the tenor, and, lastly, as a full chorus. He has evidently studied to combine extreme simplicity with the utmost earnestness of feeling, and in this he has succeeded. This "number" is destined to have almost as extensive a use as the hymn itself. Immediately following is a chorus for five voices—B minor, common time—"Now we believe." A fugal opening, of ingenious construction, leads to an *ensemble* passage (*sempre grave*) on the words, "This is indeed the Christ," and this, in turn, is followed by a resumption of the first subject. But the ending is most impressive of all. The voices, in unison on the tonic (B natural) declaim *ff*, "This is indeed the Christ," to an accompaniment which, beginning on the chord of G minor, ends (the bass descending by degrees) on that of C sharp, major. Then, after a pause, the voices still in unison, drop, *pp*, to the dominant on the words "the Saviour of the world," and the final cadence is reached. The effect is impressive in the highest degree. The tenor air, "His salvation is nigh them that fear Him" succeeds, and is a worthy companion to that of the contralto. A distinctive accompaniment for the *cello* is very noticeable throughout, and is remarkable for the masterly style in which it is written. Following this solo comes the final choruses, "I will call upon the Lord," and "Blessed be the Lord God." The former is prefaced by the combined themes of the introduction, and is a vigorous piece of musical declamation. It is to the latter, however, that we must look for an example of Dr. Bennett's power as a writer of oratorio music. This is a fugue in D major, with a very bold and well marked subject, which the most untrained ear can readily distinguish however wrapped up. In handling this theme Dr. Bennett has done so well as to make us regret he did not fulfil the promise held out by a solitary "inversion," and work the fugue out with all the device of which he is evidently a master. But though he declined to do this, he has risen in it to a very great height, and has given us a proof that the race of contrapuntists is not yet quite extinct.

After these remarks a summary of the merits of the work is hardly needed. That the *Woman of Samaria* will live, and bring honour to its composer, there cannot be a doubt. If only for the production of a work which is a real addition to the treasures of art, the Birmingham Festival of 1867 will be worthy of lasting remembrance.

MUSIC IN BELGIUM.—The extraordinary success achieved by the Congress of Religious Music in Belgium, on their offering, in 1864, prizes for musical composition, has induced MM. Schott, of Brussels, to originate a double competition for sacred music, the one International, the other exclusively Belgian. The Messrs. Schott have already obtained the patronage of the Belgian Government, as well as secured the co-operation of Messrs. the Members of the Congress of 1864. The International competition will be restricted to the composition of a Mass for three male voices (tenors and bass), in an easy style and suitable for ordinary annual festivals. Composers of all countries will be allowed to compete. The second competition will be confined to Belgian musicians, who are to essay their powers on the four ancient hymns to the Virgin, "Ave Regina," "Regina Coeli," "Salve Regina," or "Alma Redemptoris Mater;" or to the four following motets, "Ave verum," "Ecce Panis," "O Salutaris," or "O Sacrum Convivium." Prospectus with full particulars may be had on application, or by letter, enclosing a stamped envelope to Schott & Co., 159, Regent Street, London.

MUSICAL LETTERS FROM PARIS.

AUBER.*

The two Grand-Masters of Musical Art in Paris pursue a completely opposite mode of life. While Rossini enjoys his day by passing it in Olympian repose, Auber requires constant activity. The former avoids every kind of exertion as something which would wear out the machinery of his existence; the latter, on the contrary, seems to fear that indolence would cause the works to grow rusty and stop. Rossini, a refined symbol of the Italian *dolce far niente*, keeps at a distance the world, with all its enjoyments as well as all its serious affairs, and nothing can surpass the repose of his life in town except that of his life at his country-house. Auber, who is the incorporation of French restlessness, would, on the contrary, die, were he not to come constantly into contact with society; even during the heat of summer, the bustle of Paris possesses a greater charm for him than the idyllic monotony of a rural life.—Auber is 85 years old; we can not well suppose that, at such an age, his activity can be attended with any great advantage to art, but it is in itself a phenomenon. The grey-haired master retires to bed at one o'clock in the morning, and gets up regularly at five. A cup of tea for breakfast has to constitute all his nourishment till about seven in the evening, when he plays his part valiantly at a solid and set dinner. It is rarely that he can stay at home later than nine o'clock in the morning. He goes to the Conservatory, to the Senate, or to the Institute; lounges on the Boulevards, or takes a carriage-drive. In his own house, Auber does not see so much company as Rossini, though his brilliant circumstances would render the duties of hospitality easy for him. Is this because he is not married? Yet there is an elegant and stately lady to whom people pay almost the honours due to the mistress of the house. The composer of *Fra Diavolo*, who grew up in a feeling of admiration for the fair sex, and is still susceptible to their charms, could not exist without having females about him. Auber receives incomparably fewer visits than Rossini. It is not everyone who possesses the desire and the courage to visit a celebrated man before eight o'clock in the morning, especially when he is guarded by his household with fearful zealousness. The basis of the Auberian system of fortifications is a weird-like old housekeeper, who has guarded the composer's street-door in the Rue St. Georges for the last forty years, by word and deed. This celebrated female demon looks upon every visit intended for her master as a personal insult to herself, and is capable of hurling with outstretched arms the affrighted stranger into the road. Fortunately, I enjoyed, in the course of four months, plenty of opportunities for closely observing Auber in his social character as well as his character as an artist and a man of business. It was near the termination of the Italian operatic season. Adelina Patti, who, in her elegant residence of the Avenue des Champs Elysées, did not lead so claustral a life as she did, in 1863, in the Klostergasse, Vienna, gave her acquaintances a joyous farewell soirée. According to the custom of Paris and London, the evening-party was preceded by a dinner offered to a more restricted circle of friends. Besides some ladies living in the house, and friends of the hostess, Bagier, the manager of the Italian Opera; M. de Thal, Russian Councillor of State; Gustave Doré, the painter; and the famous horn-player, Vivier, occupied places at the table. Vivier's presence is a well-known guarantee for good-humour. Vivier enjoys everywhere the greatest popularity as an amusing companion, maker of jokes, and teller of anecdotes. A genuine original, to-day the lion of a drawing-room, to-morrow a "Bohemian," he is as much at home in the most smoke-begrimed public-house frequented by artists, as in the saloons of the Emperor Napoleon. A German speech, made by him towards the end of dinner, brought back vividly to my mind the similar talent of Alex. Baumann. Vivier, whose entire stock of German was limited to the words "meine Herren," arose with a glass of champagne in his hand; and, with a gravity that convulsed his hearers, began pouring forth a flood of nonsense, which no one understood, but which everyone supposed to be German. The gesticulations and modulations, too, of German speechifiers on festive occasions were imitated with eminent comicality. The general feeling was worked up to such a pitch of hilarity that every fresh joke fell upon good ground.

* From the Berlin *Echo*.

Such, for instance, was the case with the proposal to drive off at once (in the darkness of the night) to Doré's studio, for the purpose of seeing his new picture, *The Gaming Table at Homburg*. Two faces were quickly engaged, and we drove off to the studio which was situated close by in the Rue Bayard. The colossal *genre* picture in question, with nearly one hundred figures life-size, which was destined to be, some weeks later, the principal attraction in the Fine Art Exhibition, was standing, still unfinished, in utter darkness. It was rather funny to see Doré, with a lamp in his hand, mount the scaffolding and light up the picture from the right, while his colour-grinder, perched upon a ladder, illuminated the left side. Doré, whose clever illustrations of *Don Quixote*, *Dornröschen*, and Dante's *Divina Commedia* have long been known in Germany, is a neat young man, with very prepossessing features and manners, one of those genuinely French artistic beings who combine the fullest enjoyment of life with the most astonishing industry. He urged us to leave as soon as possible the half-darkness of his studio and return to the brilliantly lighted drawing-room. This was already filled with a dazzling throng of beautiful women, popular artists, and diplomatists glittering with orders. The celebrated vocalist, Grisi, had just entered with her three daughters, young girls as slim as fawns, with dark tresses, and eyes beaming with intelligence. They seated themselves near that dark centifolious rose, Carlotta Patti, and Marie Krebs, the German forget-me-not. The Marquis de Caux, one of the stars in the world of fashionable young Parisians, had, as leader of the cotillon, just clapped his hands several times, when there was suddenly perceptible a slight movement at the door, towards which all eyes were turned, and a little old gentleman advanced through the rows of guests who respectfully made way for him. The young mistress of the house with all the natural magic peculiar to her hastened to meet him. This latest of all her guests, in faultless patent leather boots, and white cravat, with the rosette of the Legion of Honour in his button-hole, and his opera-hat under his arm, was Auber. Having greeted, with great politeness, the members of the family, he stood looking at the dancing a full hour. He then entered into several short conversations, right and left, till two handsome women compelled the gallant maestro to seat himself near them on the sofa. That a man of the age of eighty-five can make up his mind, several times a week, to relinquish, about ten o'clock in the evening, his comfortable arm-chair, dress, and deliver himself over to the pressure and hustling of a large party—this is something that astounds me more than *La Mulette di Portici*. The papers may well continue to honour him with the stereotyped surnames of "ever-blooming youth," "youthful patriarch," and so on, only the reader must not suppose from these expressions that there is aught like foppery or undue desire to please about the composer. Such a supposition would be an act of deep injustice. No one can behave with greater seriousness and simplicity than Auber. The love of jokes, and the ever playful humour of Rossini are quite foreign to him, and even still more so the affectation and coquetry of a would-be young man, like A. W. Schlegel. His sharp glance, shooting out from beneath his thick eyebrows, as though from a bush, imparts even a certain amount of gloom to Auber's seriousness. Just as Rossini is open and loquacious, Auber is close, chary of his words, and formal. He is seldom seen to smile, except, perhaps, when conversing with ladies. His taste for brilliant society had full scope this season. I saw him, never tired, at the magnificent parties given by the Emperor to Marshall Vaillant, and by the ministers, MM. Rouher and Forcade; at the distribution of prizes of the Exposition; and, lastly, over and over again at the Opera. He seldom was absent from the Italians, whenever Adelina Patti sang, for he considers her the first living operatic singer. He used to be seen in the second row of stalls applauding enthusiastically; for her farewell benefit he ordered a splendid nosegay from Nice. When one of his own operas is performed, he never appears in the front of the house, but is fond of going behind the scenes. I met him there among the "fishermen of Portici," during a miserable performance of *La Mulette*, which must have occasioned melancholy comparisons in his mind. But even he himself, the composer of this charming opera, gave us cause to bewail the ravages of time. Some new grand tallet music composed by him for the Market-

scene in the third act, was so exceedingly weak and common-place that it absolutely required a strong effort to believe that Auber was the composer of it. Far prettier, though still nothing very great, is a little simple *andante*, which Auber composed for Adelina Patti, and which she is in the habit of introducing in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

Auber was chairman of the jury appointed to decide on the merits of the Prize Cantatas and Hymns of Peace—not a chairman in the bills only, like Rossini, but a really working one. It is true that he did not take part in the first rough task of playing through 200 cantatas and 800 hymns—the most inhuman barbarian would not have required him to do that—but he attended the last two long meetings, when the best of the compositions sent in were performed. Unfortunately he did not utter a single syllable in the way of an opinion or a proposal, but confined himself to conducting the voting in the Parisian fashion and to declaring the result. Our preliminary labours already mentioned were carried on next to Auber's study in the Conservatory; he could not get to it except through our room. We were thus able to observe him in the full swing of his activity day after day. Sometimes he came from the examinations in the singing or elocution classes, to hurry away forthwith to the classes of pianists or fiddlers; sometimes he conferred with the teachers or officials of the establishment—in a word, he was indefatigable. Only those who know this large and complicated institution can have any notion of the duties, if only of a formal nature, which it imposes on him. Auber was kind enough to take me to an examination of one of the classes. He sat with four professors at a green table, heard some dozen female pupils play their pieces, and, after each piece, entered his verdict in the great book.

One of the few opinions I ever heard Auber express on his art afforded evidence of his having studied, and of his esteeming, Gluck's music. Gevaert had just informed him that he was preparing Gluck's *Armida* for the Grand Opera. Auber praised the selection of this work, which he prefers to *Alceste*, and immediately cited the most prominent pieces of it. "But," he added, with animation, "how much has the author of the book, also, done! What verses, and what situations! Gluck is to be envied for such a libretto!" Is not this praise bestowed on the author of the book—Quinault—this envying laudation of a libretto two hundred years old, characteristic of a French composer?

One morning that I arrived somewhat too early at the Conservatory, I found Auber in his room, seated at the small table-formed piano, which, if I am not mistaken, once belonged to his predecessor Cherubini. Auber has very frequently composed on this instrument during the last twenty years; on this occasion, also, it served him as a laboratory for producing a new opera, which is to be completed next winter. "C'est une imprudence dans mon âge"—the same words the old man had used when speaking to me several years previously. The polite duty of contradiction was somewhat difficult even then, but, on the last occasion, the words absolutely stuck in my throat. The melancholy weakness of Auber's last opera (*La Fiancée du Roi de Garbes*) and its complete failure, decked out by a general feeling of respect to look like a triumph, forbid our entertaining any hope of the new score. But the earnest purpose, and love of work possessed by the venerable composer, who, though overwhelmed with wealth and laurels, sturdily continues to produce, commands our admiration. I contemplated attentively the little shrivelled old man, as, glowing with inward fire, he got up and shut the piano. What times have passed over that white head! As a boy, Auber often saw Louis XVI., whose carriage his father painted and gilded. His first romances, written when he was twelve years old, were sung by gay ladies of the Directory in the saloons of Barras. His first little opera was played by a company of amateurs at Doyen's in Paris, sixty-two years ago. He then went to a banker's in London to study commerce, but, soon tired of the experiment, returned to Paris, and resolved to re-commence his musical studies under Cherubini. His first two operas in the Théâtre Feydeau were failures. In after-years, Adolphe Adam, the composer of *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*, begged Auber for the scores. "What, in the name of Heaven, do you want with them?" asked Auber. "They are miserable attempts!"—"All the better," replied Adam; "I will show them to my pupils whenever the latter feel desponding."

With the greatest delight have I again heard here in Paris *La Muette* and *Fra Diavolo*. In forty years they have lost nothing of their freshness and brilliancy. I felt happy at seeing him who created these works, and who, at his advanced age, still full of life, continues labouring on. He feels inwardly young. What does he care about the date of his baptismal certificate? "Poor Caraffa, how old he is getting!" whispered Auber to me, as his younger colleague entered the room where the jury met. Auber is greatly attached, though without timidity, to life. He sometimes expresses his feeling on this point with a certain amount of humour. "Death seems really inclined to make a clearance among the old operatic composers," he observed to a friend, on returning from Meyerbeer's funeral ceremony. "It will be *Rossini's* turn next."

A Festival Sermon.*

"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."—*TITUS* i. 13.

There are three things connected with our triennial festivals which are very clear—First: Their antiquity. This is the 144th festival which is commenced in our cathedral to-day, and to Englishmen any custom that has the prescription of so long a period of years is regarded as, in some measure, recommended to our favour by the simple fact that it is an ancient custom. Secondly: we need not doubt that the object of these festivals is a good one, namely, the wish to make a collection for the widows and orphans of the clergy of the three united dioceses. True followers in faith of the crucified Jesus have always been led by the spirit to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. Thirdly: Whilst these festivals come to us recommended by their antiquity and their object, we cannot overlook the fact that they have been much spoken against by some, but that, on the other hand, opposition to them, come it from what quarter it might, has only resulted in producing a larger patronage of them by the laity, and in showing how popular these festivals are. These three points are plain to us all; but then we must remember that all ancient customs are not good, nor wise, nor expedient to be continued. Secondly: If the object be good the method of obtaining that object may not be, and we know how St. Paul rebukes those who dare to say—let us do evil that good may come. Thirdly: Popularity is not a necessary sign of goodness in things or in men; nevertheless the *vox populi* is sometimes the *vox Dei*, and if a custom be much and ably attacked, and by such as are rightly held in estimation, for godliness and piety in the church, and yet maintains its grounds, rather increasing in its hold over the laity than relaxing it, we cannot help asking (praying God to give us in this, as in all other matters in dispute among hotter Christians, a right judgment) what is right and what is wrong in this matter. The holding of these festivals is an ancient custom. Looking to their object—a benevolent one—it may be allowed to be a popular custom, but is it to such as would rule themselves by God's word, and keep themselves unspotted from the evil that is in the world, and do what they do in the name and according to the will of Christ—is it to such a godly and an innocent custom? Let us consider the objections then. They come from two quarters—some with high ecclesiastical views disliking the holding of these festivals in our cathedral churches, others ground their objections more on the form the oratorios take, the recitation in them of Scripture histories, and notably the humiliation and the glory of our blessed Redeemer. Moreover, they allege that too much of gaiety attends these festivals—the harp and the viol, the tabret, the pipe, and wine are in these feasts; there is the sound not only of music but of dancing; surely, say they: these people cannot regard the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands; who can touch pitch and not be defiled? So, for God's sake, and for conscience' sake, they feel constrained to hold aloof from these festivals. I have stated, I hope fairly, the objections; let me now, God being my helper, examine them:—1st.—Do we do right in holding these festivals in our mother churches, and in the cathedrals of the three dioceses in succession? The highest object to be had in view in the use of God's House is undoubtedly devotion; it is the house of prayer, the house where prayer and praise and God's Word, read and preached, and sacraments duly administered, should help on the glory of God and Christ and the progress of souls to heaven. But is it wrong to use God's House for other purposes, not so high as this, but innocent in themselves, and in a subordinate manner conducive to God's glory? We meet here for a benevolent purpose,—to collect money for the widow and the orphan; our subordinate purpose is good,—we wish to encourage sacred music. Moreover, an indirect effect of holding these festivals is good: by bringing together persons from all parts of our county, it tends to heal

those breaches of brotherly feeling which struggles in public matters are apt to cause. We meet gravely, reverently. Now that the daily service is uninterrupted may we not say that the festival is sanctified to all who attend our daily prayers by the word of God and prayer. If in old times there was any lightness or irreverence in those who gathered to listen to the sacred music rehearsed before them, is not every abuse of that kind rapidly disappearing now, people thinking that lightness of deportment, the thoughtless jest, the unbridled tongue ought not to be permitted in the house of God? If our main purpose here be not devotion, and therefore not of the highest kind, yet, because it is of a lower kind, is it therefore a sinful and profane one? We come to hear no vain songs, but to listen to what I might call a prolonged anthem, the solemn words recited are often culled from the sublimest portions of God's inspired Word. Indeed, if the matter of the oratorios be not excepted against, why should we scruple to come to hear them in the Cathedral. This holy place seems the fittest for those choral recitations, rather than those halls of assembly or the secular concert room, to which some, in their zeal for the house of God, would banish them. I think, then, it is not the sacredness of the place which will make the assembling of ourselves together here, to be for the worse not for the better: this will only result from people bringing here vain and trifling thoughts. Should we not preach "Come rightly" rather than "Come not at all." Should we not say, "Take care to hold your festival reverently" rather than "Take these things hence." This ancient custom seems to me to be of the number of those things, which, as the text has it, are "pure to those who are pure." If we bring vain, trifling, and worldly thoughts here, it is bad. But where are such things, tried by the standard of the holy gospel, not to be regretted? If our hearts be yet untouched by grace, if our consciences be defiled by impenitence, worldliness, or love of sin, this festival will not be pure to us. But what will be? Such an uncorrected taste will make all things unwholesome, spiritually, to those who have it: such moral darkness will not make that a pillar of cloud to them, which to others, spiritually minded, may be as a pillar of fire and of light. The word of God stands sure, "To the pure all things are pure, but to them that are defiled is nothing pure." But why? Because "their heart and their conscience is defiled."—2nd. But, if the assembling here be held to be free from objection, as by some who yet dislike these festivals for other causes, it is, yet say some: are you rightly using the matter of God's Word when you allow the words of scripture, and particularly the pathetic history of the Man of Sorrows, to be set forth, not specially to make the worldly and the sinful to repent and fall down before the cross of Jesus convinced of sin, but merely that man's skill and art may find in such solemn passages the noblest themes whereunto to join the beauties which music can impart. The use of Holy Scripture in this way seems to many to be objectionable; of course, if it be thus used in an irreverent manner, it is altogether indefensible; but if it be done decently, reverently, and in an orderly way, I think it may be held to be justifiable and innocent. The highest use of Holy Scripture, whether of the Old or New Testament, is unquestionably to make it profitable for doctrine about Christ, for reproof of evil, for correction of our hopes and aims, for instruction in the way of righteousness; for this it was given, for this in the main it should be used. But may we not still innocently use it in a subordinate way? We hold that the poet may take from Scripture subjects for the exercise of poetical skill; Scripture subjects do not seem degraded when portrayed before us by the pencil of the artist. The Descent from the Cross, the Entombment of the Saviour, His Transfiguration, His Last Supper with His Disciples, have been treated in a manner to extort the admiration of every beholder, capable by nature or education of appreciating art. How shall we deny to the musician what is conceded to the poet and to the artist? Were Milton and Raphael right in their use of Scripture, and Handel, Mozart, Mendelssohn wrong? And if the musician may exercise his genius on Scripture themes, may it not be allowed to the gifted singer and instrumentalist to reproduce, and for us to be allowed to enjoy, with thankfulness to God, who has given such powers unto man, the creations of that genius. We meet, or ought so to meet, as those whose conversation is in Heaven. Need we add that to such is forbidden this less constrained use of the Word of God than the very highest. Surely not, rather may we believe that to compose, execute, or listen to an oratorio, is lawful, justifiable, and innocent. It is one of these things which is, as our text has it, "pure to those who are pure," and that our duty is not to do away with this ancient custom, but to urge all to take heed that they come gravely, not lightly; reverently, not thoughtlessly, to assist at it. It is a sad thing, say some, that men should hear the Passion of our Lord, for its tragical beauty, for the music art has blended with it—who yet know not, scarcely perhaps wish to know, the saving power of the cross of Christ. All may well regret that any in this Christian land are so blinded by the God of this world as to be content to be apart from God and Christ. Nevertheless, even to such, I know not that I should say, or ought to say, Come not in hither. For the times and modes of the action of God's Spirit on man's soul are so free, so unknown, so

* Preached by the Dean of Hereford, on Tuesday morning, Aug. 20.

various, and the power of solemn music so powerful to unlock the chambers of man's heart and mind, that good may be done, and some soul rendered more susceptible to the action of grace. David's harp, we know, soothed the spirit of Saul, and induced a frame of mind, which, had God's purpose not been thwarted by further sin, might have ended in the king's conversion to piety and true religion. But let us not think of the unworthy alone—do not forget that among those, who come to this place, or go elsewhere to hear these solemn strains, there are many who are well-known for piety and regularity of life, Christian virtue, and Christian faith—they come as to a refined and religious pleasure to hear music which will not only please the ear, but touch their hearts, associated as it is with the teaching of God's Word. Do not overlook the wheat because of the tares; if the net gathers of the bad will it not gather of the good also; yea, more of the good than of the bad. I cannot help thinking that more come together to these meetings in a good frame of mind than is ordinarily supposed. How is it to be accounted for, that of all the performances here on similar occasions—the *Messiah* is the one incontestably most popular and best attended? and if so, shall we, because some come in a more thoughtless way, deny to the many inclined to come aright the pleasure of hearing these precious musical treasures of the Christian Church, and of hearing them to the greatest advantage, as rendered by the first artists of our country, and intensified in their solemnity by the *religio loci* of our Cathedral Church. 3rd. But there remains still the objection against the mode of these festivals—too much of gaiety and amusement and company attends them; there is the sound not only of music but of dancing. Can these be regarded as innocent? Can the disciples of a crucified Redeemer, can pilgrims who seek a better country, can they who, as baptized Christians, are spoken of as children of God, join in such things without their heart or their conscience becoming defiled. Brethren, in this matter of amusement we must recollect that the rule of true spiritual Christianity is not "touch not, taste not," but take care that amusements do not take up too much time, stand in the way of duty, injure or corrupt the mind. Of sin, the Gospel says, "flee from it;" of amusement, it says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." The Christian is free, but he must not use his freedom as a cloak for what is wrong, or for an imprudent use of that which, if employed in moderation, is innocent. Gaiety, amusement, company, are wrong only in excess. Each of us must be in this matter a law unto himself. Christianity does not proscribe such things, but only regulates them. True religion must be accompanied by a determined separation always from things wrong and sinful; often by a prudent separation for conscience' sake from things in themselves innocent, if injurious to ourselves. Nevertheless, we need not put a brand upon this or that species of amusement, as if, because it should be engaged in moderately, with care, and not too frequently, it should never be permitted at all. What is required in this matter of amusement is not total abstinence, but a prudent moderation, for unworldliness does not consist in giving up this or that, but in a certain inward principle—the wish to please God and Christ, and to be guided by their will. We must all be honest in this matter; do not forget you have a soul to save, a Saviour to serve, a preparation for eternity to make through faith; do not overlook these paramount obligations, but if your spiritual duties and obligations are not made to suffer, then amusement, company, and gaiety are not, in moderation, wrong. The asceticism of John the Baptist was not made the rule of Christianity; the fact that the blessed Jesus came "eating and drinking," mingling in the feast, accepting hospitality, shows that, in such matters, what is required in us is moderation, not total abstinence—total abstinence from sin—moderation in all those matters which, being innocent in themselves, become wrong if used in excess to the injury and dissipation of the mind. Now, it is believed by those who promote these festivals that there is nothing in the conduct of them that violates these rules of Christian moderation; they believe, therefore, that the holding of these festivals is an innocent as well as an ancient and popular custom, and they venture to add that if so much can be urged in favour of this custom, they who hold aloof from these festivals ought—if they continue so to do—to devise a means of gathering, to the same extent and with the same regularity, and benevolences of the Church for the relief of the widows and orphans of the clergy, and if they cannot do this that they ought, as a matter of principle, to assist at these festivals themselves. Their presence would tend to promote order, reverence, and to discourage everything unseemly; and the more the manner of holding these festivals can be improved the better will be the effect in the city and diocese of Hereford. Right glad am I that of late years the recurrence of the festival has not been allowed to interrupt our daily service; yea, by the willing presence of the united choirs, has tended rather to increase the solemnity and beauty of it. I trust that day by day we who are here this morning may be present each morning during the week to offer up our prayers and praises to Almighty God. If St. Paul says to Titus, "To the pure all things are pure," he says to

Timothy, "keep thyself pure;" and how?—by seeking in all means of grace the Spirit of God through Jesus. Then I think that we are not likely to set an example of light conduct ourselves, or tolerate without rebuke irreverence in others, during the performance of the sacred music in this church; nor to hear without some spiritual profit those solemn Scripture histories which have furnished the themes to the genius of Handel and Mozart, of Mendelssohn and Spohr. The early service, rightly attended, will leave a blessing behind it on our souls, and so, though the harp, the viol, the tabret, and wine are in our feasts, we need not fear that with justice it shall be alleged against us who have begun the day with prayer and praise that "they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of His hands." And whilst thus carrying out the festival with studied reverence and piety let us take care to assist its holy purpose with Christian and self-denying liberality. We meet as brother Churchmen to help to keep up the fund which the piety of our forefathers began to provide for the widows and the orphans of the clergy in these united dioceses. St. James bids those who would live in the spirit of pure and undefiled religion to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world, especially from that cynical and stolid indifference to another's grief which worldly selfishness and covetousness engenders. The true Christian has a feeling heart, and well may the sorrows of the widow and the orphan be made the special touchstone of our dispositions, the proof-test of whether we have that sensitiveness to other's sorrow which is the characteristic of all those who have within them the mind of the Spirit of Christ. For who can exaggerate the sorrow, the depression, and the sinking of the mind of those who are called to mourn the husband, and the father, and then, in the bitterness of their grief, to go forth into the world, leaving the old haunts of home, with no provision, perhaps, but a scanty pittance at best. We can do with almost nothing if we have not known better days, but to descend from a competence to unquestionable poverty is a lot very hard to bear, and which calls loudly for our sympathy and for our aid. It has been the characteristic of all disciples of the Reformation to approve and rather to encourage the marriage of the clergy. Most rightly have they done so. But, then, if this be accepted as a principle among us, surely it should incline us to assist the widows and the orphans of those clergy who, through poverty, have been unable to make a suitable provision for their own. You cannot, brethren, visit these cases yourselves, though perhaps there are but few among us who do not know some instance in which this charity has, by replenishing the slender store, made a widow's heart leap for joy and the tongue of the orphan to rejoice, till the administration of this our charity has abounded, by the thanksgivings of many, to the glory of God. But, however this may be, knowing how carefully these funds are husbanded, how carefully, without partiality and after due enquiry, they are apportioned, I urge you to entrust to the keepers of this fund what you are able and willing to devote in God's name to this good purpose. Do so in the name of the blessed Jesus, who, though He was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, who, when He saw the sorrow of the widow of Nain, had compassion on her, and who takes as done to Himself every act of love we do in faith to others for His sake, who by His precious blood-shedding hath redeemed our souls and opened to us the gate of everlasting life.

PARIS INTELLIGENCE.—The rehearsals of M. Ambroise Thomas's new opera, *Hamlet*, have commenced at the Grand Opéra. The parts are now affixed as follows:—Hamlet, M. Faure; Horatio, M. Castelmarty; Laertes, M. Morère; the King, M. Belval; Polonius, M. Machelaere; Marcellus, M. Grisy; the Ghost, M. David; First Gravedigger, M. Gaspard; Second Gravedigger, M. Mermand; the Queen, Madame Gueymard; Ophelia, Mdle. Christine Nilsson. The libretto has been adapted by MM. Michel Carré and Jules Barbier.—The American tenor, Signor Mazzoleni—or, more properly, the Italian tenor from America—will shortly make his appearance at the Opéra.—The London seal set upon the reputation of Mdle. Nilsson has not been without its effects on Parisian audiences. The young lady is more feted than ever at the Théâtre-Lyrique and she is now proclaimed a great actress as well as a great singer. Mdle. Nilsson has something to thank the director of Her Majesty's Theatre for. On the occasion of each of her three performances recently in *Martha*, the enthusiasm she created far surpassed what she had achieved before her going to England.—Signor Verdi has arrived in Paris from Genoa.—A new baritone, *on dit*, not unlikely to eclipse M. Faure, has appeared at the Opéra as Pietro, in *Masaniello*, and achieved a remarkable success. His name is Devoyod. In the duet, "Amour sacré de la Patrie," with M. Villaret, as the Neapolitan Fisherman, he was enthusiastically applauded. M. Devoyod is declared to have a magnificent voice and to possess true instincts for the stage.

THE HARP.

To the Editor of the MUSICAL WORLD.

SIR,—In his excellent "Traité général d'instrumentation," Mr. F. A. Gevaert says, p. 172:—"La harpe ne fait pas rigoureusement partie de l'orchestre. Ni Haydn, ni Mozart, ni Beethoven, ne s'en sont servis, que je sache, dans leurs innombrables productions." Did not Mr. Gevaert, when he wrote this (1863), know Beethoven's admirable ballet, *Gli Uomini di Prometeo*? Some fragments of this work, and among them the beautiful *adagio* with the harp, are executed now and then by the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire at Paris, since the 5th March, 1854. The overture was known long before.—I am, sir, yours obediently,
CARLO STALDA.
Paris.

MARGATE.—The engagement of Mr. Charles Lyall, which terminates to-night, has proved a trump card at the Hall-by-the-Sea. This gentleman has won golden opinions for his eminently artistic rendering of the various songs he has sung. The clever manager, Mr. E. P. Hingston, has no doubt secured Mr. Lyall's services for next season. Miss Rebecca Isaacs, too, has proved a great attraction. Both these artists have been well supported by Mlle. Binfield, who made so successful a *début* here some weeks since. The orchestra, under the direction of Mr. C. Hall, continues to give the same satisfaction as usual.

MADAME PAREPA-ROSA is announced to make her *rentrée* at the Academy of Music, New York, the last week in September. She is to sing in *Don Giovanni*, *Norma*, *Otello*, and *Lucrezia Borgia*.

MUSIC RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

JOHN HADDON & Co.—"Mary Hamilton," song; by Augusta Meyrick.
BOSEY & Co.—"Alice's Gracie," ballad; by Augusta Meyrick.
HAMMOND & Co.—"Ally Malone," ballad; by J. W. Thirlwall.

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